

Modern Art in Europe and the Americas, 1900–1950



32-1 • Pablo Picasso **MA JOLIE**
1911–1912. Oil on canvas, 39 $\frac{3}{4}$ " × 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (100 × 65.4 cm). Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest (176.1945)

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Pablo Picasso was a towering presence at the center of the Parisian art world throughout much of the twentieth century, continually transforming the forms, meanings, and conceptual frameworks of his art as his style and themes developed in relation to the many factors at play in the world around him. Early in the century in his great Cubist work **MA JOLIE (FIG. 32-1)** of 1911–1912, Picasso challenged his viewers to think about the very nature of communication through painting. Remnants of the subjects Picasso worked from are evident throughout, but any attempt to reconstruct the “subject”—a woman with a stringed instrument—poses difficulties for the viewer. *Ma Jolie* (“My Pretty One”) is in some sense a portrait, though hardly a traditional one. Picasso makes us work to see and to understand the figure. We can discover several things about *Ma Jolie* from the painting; we can see parts of her head, her shoulders, and the curve of her body, a hand or a foot. But in Paris in 1911, “*Ma Jolie*” was also the title of a popular song, so the inclusion of writing and a musical staff in the painting may also suggest other meanings. Our first impulse might be to wonder what exactly is pictured on the canvas. To that question, Picasso provided the sarcastic answer, “It’s My Pretty One!”

On the other hand, it might be argued that the human subject provided only the raw material for a formal, abstract

arrangement. A subtle tension between order and disorder is maintained throughout this painting. For example, the shifting effect of the surface—a delicately patterned texture of grays and browns—is unified through the use of short, horizontal brushstrokes. Similarly, with the linear elements, strict horizontals and verticals dominate, although curves and angles break up their regularity. The combination of horizontal brushwork and right angles firmly establishes a grid that effectively counteracts the surface flux. Moreover, the repetition of certain diagonals and the relative lack of details in the upper left and upper right create a pyramidal shape reminiscent of Classical systems of compositional stability (see FIG. 21-5). Thus, what at first may seem a chaotic composition of lines and muted colors turns out to be a carefully organized design. For many, the aesthetic satisfaction of such a work depends on the way chaos seems to resolve itself into order.

In 1923, Picasso said, “Cubism is no different from any other school of painting. The same principles and the same elements are common to all. The fact that for a long time Cubism has not been understood ... means nothing. I do not read English, [but] this does not mean that the English language does not exist, and why should I blame anyone ... but myself if I cannot understand [it]?”

LEARN ABOUT IT

32.1 Assess the impact of Cubism on abstract art in the early twentieth century and explore how and why Abstract Expressionism transformed painting after 1940.

32.2 Examine the different ways that artists in the Modern period responded directly or indirectly to the violence of war.

32.3 Determine the political and economic impact of the Great Depression on interwar European and American art.

32.4 Investigate how Dada and Surrealism changed the form, content, and concept of art.

EUROPE AND AMERICA IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the fragile idea that “civilization” would inexorably continue to progress began to fissure and finally cracked in an orgy of violence during World War I. Beginning in August 1914, the war initially pitted the Allies (Britain, France, and Russia) against the Central Powers (Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and the Ottoman Empire. The United States eventually entered the war on the side of Britain and France in 1917, helping to guarantee victory for the Allies the following year.

World War I transformed almost every aspect of Western society—including politics, economics, and culture (MAP 32-1). The war was fought with twentieth-century technology but nineteenth-century strategies. Trench warfare and the Maxim gun caused the deaths of millions of soldiers and the horrible maiming of as many again. Europe lost an entire generation of young men; whole societies were shattered. Europeans began to question the nineteenth-century imperial social and political order that had precipitated this carnage and foreshadowed a change in the character of warfare itself. Future wars would be fought over ideology rather than—as in the nineteenth century—territory.

In the first half of the twentieth century, three very different political ideologies struggled for world supremacy: communism (as in the U.S.S.R. and China), fascism (as in Italy and Germany), and liberal-democratic capitalism (as in North America, Britain, and Western Europe). The October 1917 Russian Revolution led to the Russian Civil War and the eventual triumph of the Bolshevik (“Majority”) Communist Party led by Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924), as well as to the founding of the U.S.S.R. in 1922. After Lenin’s death and an internal power struggle, Joseph Stalin (1878–1953) emerged as leader of the U.S.S.R. Under Stalin, the U.S.S.R. annexed several neighboring states, suffered through the Great Purge of the 1930s, and lost tens of millions during the war against Nazi Germany.

Fascism first took firm root in Italy in October 1922 when Benito Mussolini (1883–1945) came to power. In Germany, meanwhile, the postwar democratic Weimar Republic collapsed under a combination of rampant hyperinflation and the enmity between communists, socialists, centrists, Christian Democrats, and fascists. By the time of the 1932 parliamentary election, Germany’s political and economic deterioration had paved the way for a Nazi Party victory and the chancellorship of its leader, Adolf Hitler (1889–1945). Fascism was not limited to Germany and Italy—it was widespread throughout Central and Eastern Europe and on the Iberian peninsula, where General Francisco Franco (1892–1975) emerged victorious from the Spanish Civil War.

The economic impact of World War I was global. Although the United States emerged from it as the leading economic power in the world, hyperinflation in Germany during the 1920s, the repudiation of German war debt under the Versailles Treaty, and

the United States Stock Market Crash of 1929 plunged the Western world into a Great Depression that exacerbated political hostility between the major European countries, served as an incubator for fascism and communism in Europe, and tore apart the social and political fabric of Britain and America. In the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945, president 1933–1945) created the New Deal programs in 1933 to stimulate the economy with government spending, and France and Britain took their first steps toward the modern welfare state. But ultimately only the military build-up of World War II would end the Great Depression. The war lasted from 1939 to 1945, and the human carnage it caused to both soldiers and civilians, particularly in German concentration camps, raised difficult questions about the very nature of our humanity.

Changes in scientific knowledge were also dramatic. Albert Einstein’s publication of his Special Theory of Relativity in 1905 had shaken the foundations of Newtonian physics; they collapsed with the subsequent development of quantum theory by Niels Bohr, Werner Heisenberg, and Max Planck. These developments in physics also unlocked the Pandora’s box of nuclear energy, first opened when the British split the atom in 1919, and unleashed on the world when America dropped nuclear bombs on Japan in 1945.

The early twentieth century also witnessed a multitude of innovations in technology and manufacturing: the first powered flight (1903); the mass manufacture of automobiles (1909); the first public radio broadcast (1920); the electrification of most of Western Europe and North America (1920s); and the development of both television (1926) and the jet engine (1937), to mention only a few. Technology led both to better medicines for prolonging life and to more efficient warfare, which shortened it. Information about the outside world became ever more accessible with the advent of radio, television, and film. Where the visual culture of the nineteenth century was based on paper, that of the early twentieth century was centered in photographs and films.

Just as quantum physics fundamentally altered our understanding of the physical world, developments in psychology transformed our conception of the workings of the mind, and consequently how we view ourselves. In 1900, Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud published *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which posited that our behavior is often motivated not only by reason, but by powerful forces that work below our level of awareness. The human unconscious, as he described it, includes strong urges for love and power that must be managed if society is to remain peaceful and whole. For Freud, we are always attempting to strike a balance between our rational and irrational sides, often erring on one side or the other. Also in 1900, Russian scientist Ivan Pavlov began feeding dogs just after ringing a bell. Soon the dogs salivated not at the sight of food but at the sound of the bell. The discovery that these “conditioned responses” also exist in humans showed that if we manage external stimuli we can control people’s appetites. Political leaders of all stripes soon exploited this realization.



MAP 32-1 • EUROPE, THE AMERICAS, AND NORTH AFRICA, 1900-1950

Thus the first half of the twentieth century was a time of exciting new theories and technologies, as well as increased access of ordinary people to consumer items, but it was also a time of cataclysmic social, economic, and political change, and a time when millions died in wars and concentration camps. These changes, whether for the better or for the worse, shaped the art of the early twentieth century.

EARLY MODERN ART IN EUROPE

Modern artists explored myriad new ways of seeing their world. Few read academic physics or psychology texts, but they lived in a world that was being transformed by such fields, along with so many other technological advances. Modern art was frequently subversive and intellectually demanding, and it was often visually, socially, and politically radical. It seems as if every movement in early twentieth-century art chose or acquired a distinctive label and wrote a manifesto or statement of intent, leading this to be described later as the age of “isms.”

Yet most Modern art was still bound to the idea that works of art, regardless of how they challenged vision and thought, were still precious objects—primarily pictures or sculptures. But a few artistic movements—notably Dada and some elements of

Surrealism, both of them prompted by the horrors of World War I—challenged this idea. Their preoccupations built the foundation for much art after 1950.

THE FAUVES: WILD BEASTS OF COLOR

The Salon system still operated in France, but the ranks of artists dissatisfied with its conservative precepts were swelling. In 1903, a group of malcontents, including André Derain (1880–1954), Henri Matisse (1869–1954), Georges Rouault (1871–1958), and Albert Marquet (1875–1947), organized the alternative exhibition known as the Salon d’Automne (Autumn Salon), so named to distinguish it from the official Salon that took place every spring. The Autumn Salon, which continued until after World War I, promised juries more open to avant-garde art, and the first major Modern movement of the twentieth century made its debut in this Salon’s disorderly halls. Paintings by Derain, Matisse, and Maurice de Vlaminck (1876–1958) exhibited in 1905 were filled with such explosive colors and blunt brushwork that the critic Louis Vauxcelles described the young painters as *fauves* (“wild beasts”), the French term by which they soon became known. These artists took the French tradition of color and strong brushwork to new heights of intensity and expressive power, and entirely rethought the picture’s surface.

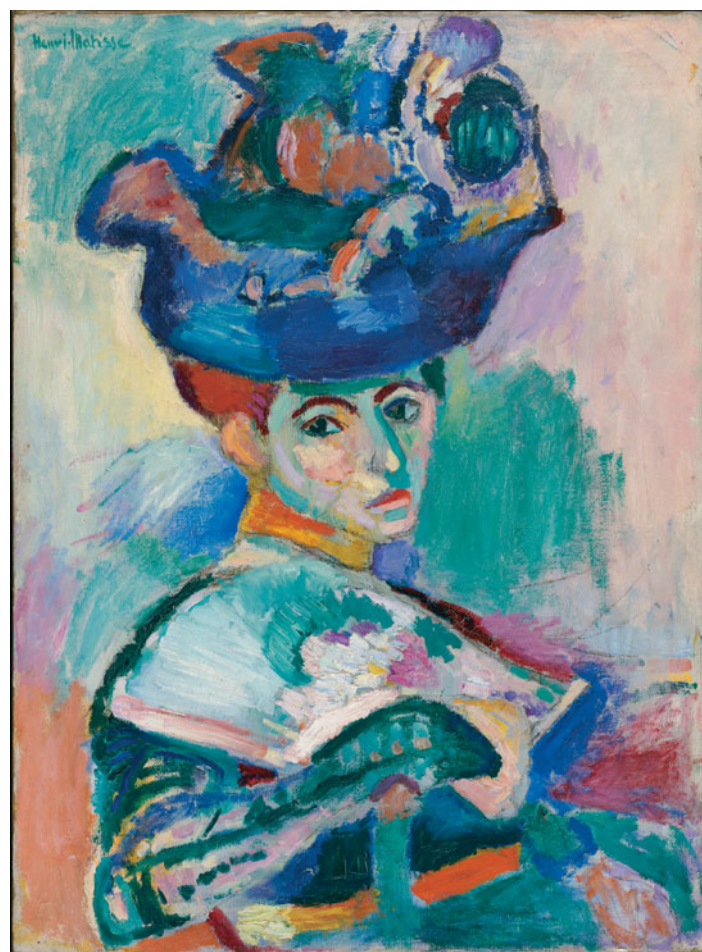
Among the first major Fauve works were paintings that Derain and Matisse made in 1905 in the French Mediterranean



32-2 • André Derain
MOUNTAINS AT COLLIOURE
 1905. Oil on canvas, 32" × 39½" (81.5 × 100 cm). National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. John Hay Whitney Collection

port town of Collioure. In **MOUNTAINS AT COLLIOURE** (FIG. 32-2), Derain used short, broad strokes of pure pigment, juxtaposing the complementary colors of blue and orange together—as in the mountain range—or red and green together—as in the trees—to intensify the hue of each. He chose a range of semi-naturalistic colors—the grass and the trees are green, the trunks are close to brown. This is recognizable as a landscape, but it is also a self-conscious exercise in painting. The uniform brightness of the colors undermines any effect of atmospheric perspective. As a consequence, viewers remain aware that they are looking at a flat canvas covered with paint, not an illusionistic rendering of the natural world. This tension between image and painting, along with the explosive effect of the color, generates a visual energy that positively pulses from the painting. Derain described his colors as “sticks of dynamite,” and his stark juxtapositions of complementary hues as “deliberate disharmonies.”

Matisse was equally interested in “deliberate disharmonies.” His **THE WOMAN WITH THE HAT** (FIG. 32-3) proved particularly controversial at the 1905 Autumn Salon because of its thick swatches of crude, seemingly arbitrary, nonnaturalistic color and its broad and blunt brushwork—the sitter, an otherwise conventional subject for a portrait, has thick green stripes across her brow and down her nose. The uproar did not stop siblings Gertrude and Leo



32-3 • Henri Matisse THE WOMAN WITH THE HAT
 1905. Oil on canvas, 31¾" × 23½" (80.6 × 59.7 cm). San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Bequest of Elise S. Haas



32-4 • Henri Matisse LE BONHEUR DE VIVRE (THE JOY OF LIFE)
1905–1906. Oil on canvas, 5'8½" × 7'9¼" (1.74 × 2.38 m). The Barnes Foundation, Merion, Pennsylvania. (BF 719)

Stein, among the most important American patrons of avant-garde art at this time, from purchasing the work in 1905.

The same year, Matisse also began painting **LE BONHEUR DE VIVRE (THE JOY OF LIFE)** (FIG. 32-4), a large pastoral landscape depicting a golden age—a reclining nude in the foreground plays pan pipes, another piper herds goats in the right mid-ground, lovers embrace in the foreground while others frolic in dance in the background. Like Cézanne's *The Large Bathers* painted in the same year (see FIG. 31-58), *The Joy of Life* is academic in scale and theme, but avant-garde in most other respects—notably in the way the figures appear “flattened” and in the distortion of the spatial relations between them. Matisse emphasized expressive color, drawing on folk-art traditions in his use of unmodeled forms and bold outlines. In the past, artists might express feeling through the figures’ poses or facial expressions, but now, he wrote, “The whole arrangement of my picture is expressive. The place occupied by figures or objects, the empty spaces around them, the proportions, everything plays a part The chief aim of color should be to serve expression as well as possible.”

PICASSO, “PRIMITIVISM,” AND THE COMING OF CUBISM

Of all Modern art “isms” created before World War I, Cubism was probably the most influential. The joint invention of Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) and Georges Braque (1882–1963)—who worked side by side in Paris, the undisputed capital of the art world before 1950—Cubism proved a fruitful launching pad for both artists, allowing them to comment on modern life and investigate the ways in which artists perceive and represent the world around them.

PICASSO’S EARLY ART Born in Málaga, Spain, Picasso was an artistic child prodigy. During his teenage years at the National Academy in Madrid, he painted highly polished works that presaged a conservative artistic career, but his restless temperament led him to Barcelona in 1899, where he involved himself in avant-garde circles. In 1900, he first traveled to Paris, and in 1904 he moved there and would live in France for the rest of his life. During this early period Picasso painted urban outcasts in weary



32-5 • Pablo Picasso FAMILY OF SALTIMBANQUES
1905. Oil on canvas, 6'11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " × 7'6 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (2.1 × 2.3 m). National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. Chester Dale Collection (1963.10.190)

poses using a coldly expressive blue palette that led art historians to label this his Blue Period. These paintings seem motivated by Picasso's political sensitivity to those he considered victims of modern capitalist society, which eventually led him to join the Communist Party.

In 1904–1905, Picasso joined a larger group of Paris-based avant-garde artists and became fascinated with the subject of *saltimbanques* (traveling acrobats). He rarely painted these entertainers performing, however, focusing instead on the hardships of their existence on the margins of society. In **FAMILY OF SALTIMBANQUES (FIG. 32-5)**, a painting from his Rose Period (so called because of the introduction of that color into his palette), five *saltimbanques* stand in weary silence to the left, while a sixth, a woman, sits in curious isolation on the right. All seem psychologically withdrawn, as uncommunicative as the empty landscape they occupy. By 1905, Picasso began to sell these works to a number of important collectors.

Around 1906, Picasso became one of the first artists in Paris to appropriate images from African art in his paintings, inspired by an encounter with “primitive” art and art beyond the Western tradition that would prove decisive in the development of his

art. In 1906, the Louvre installed a newly acquired collection of sculpture from the Iberian peninsula (present-day Spain and Portugal) dating from the sixth and fifth centuries BCE, but it was an exhibition of African masks that he saw around the same time that really changed the way Picasso thought about art. The exact date of this encounter is not known, but it might have occurred at the Musée d'Éthnographie du Trocadéro (now the Musée du Quai Branly) which opened to the public in 1882, or at the Musée Permanent des Colonies (now the Musée National des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie), or in any number of Parisian shops that sold “primitive” objects, mostly brought back from French colonies in Africa. Picasso greatly admired the expressive power and formal strangeness of African masks, and since African art was relatively inexpensive, he also bought several pieces and kept them in his studio.

The term **primitivism**, as applied to the widespread tendency among Modern artists to scour the art of other cultures beyond the Western tradition for inspiration, is not benignly descriptive; it carries modern European perceptions of relative cultural superiority and inferiority. The inherent assumption is that Western culture is superior, more civilized, more developed, and more complex than other cultures, which are less civilized, less

developed, and simpler. It could be argued that, just as colonizing nations exploited “primitive” lands in the nineteenth century for their raw materials and labor to increase their own wealth and power, so Western artists exploited the visual cultures of “primitive” nations merely to amplify ideas about themselves. Many early Modern artists thus represented other cultures and appropriated their art without understanding—without really caring to understand—how those cultures actually functioned or how their art was used. This was the case with Picasso.

His contact with African art had a huge impact on **LES DEMOISELLES D’AVIGNON (THE YOUNG LADIES OF AVIGNON)** (FIG. 32-6), one of the most radical and complex paintings of the twentieth century. Picasso deliberately sends mixed messages in this work, beginning with the title: Avignon was the seat of a papal court in the fourteenth century, so it may mean that these figures are young ladies of the court. On the other hand, “*demoiselle*” was also a euphemism for prostitute and “Avignon” was the name of a red-light district in Barcelona, forming the most common interpretation of the scene. The work’s boldness resides not only in its subject matter, but also its size. Picasso may have undertaken such

a large (nearly 8 feet square) painting in 1907 to compete with both Matisse—who exhibited *The Joy of Life* in the 1906 Salon—and Cézanne—whose *Large Bathers* was shown the same year. Like Matisse and Cézanne, Picasso revives and renegotiates the ideas of large-scale academic history painting, making use of the traditional subject of nude women shown in an interior space. There are other echoes of the Western tradition in the handling of the figures. The two in the center display themselves to the viewer like Venus rising from the sea (see FIGS. 20-40, 31-4), while that to the left takes a rigid pose with a striding stance, recalling a Greek kouros (see FIG. 5-18), and the one seated on the right might suggest the pose of Manet’s *Le Déjeuner sur l’Herbe* (see FIG. 31-17). But not all visual references point to the Western tradition. Iberian sources stand behind the faces of the three leftmost figures, with their flattened features and wide, almond-shaped eyes. The mask-like faces of the two figures at right emulate African art.

Picasso has created an unsettling picture from these sources. The women are shielded by masks, flattened and fractured into sharp angular shapes. The space they inhabit is incoherent and convulsive. The central pair raise their arms in a conventional ges-

ture of accessibility but contradict it with their hard, piercing gazes and tight mouths that create what one art historian has called “a tidal wave of aggression.” Even the fruit displayed in the foreground, symbols of female sexuality, seems brittle and dangerous. The women, Picasso suggests, are not the gentle and passive creatures that men would like them to be. This viewpoint contradicts an enduring tradition, prevalent at least since the Renaissance, of portraying sexual availability in the female nude, just as strongly as Picasso’s treatment of space shatters the reliance on orderly perspective, equally standard since the Renaissance.



32-6 • Pablo Picasso LES DEMOISELLES D’AVIGNON (THE YOUNG LADIES OF AVIGNON)

1907. Oil on canvas, 8' × 7'8" (2.43 × 2.33 m). Museum of Modern Art, New York. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest (333.1939)

 **View** the Closer Look for *Les Femmes d'Alger* on myartslab.com



32-7 • Georges Braque VIOLIN AND PALETTE
1909–1910. Oil on canvas, 36 $\frac{1}{8}$ " \times 16 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (91.8 \times 42.9 cm). Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. (54.1412)

Most of Picasso's friends were shocked by his new work. Matisse, for example, accused Picasso of making a joke of Modern art and threatened to break off their friendship. But one artist, Georges Braque, enthusiastically embraced Picasso's radical ideas—he saw in *Les Femmes d'Alger* a potential for new visual experiments. In 1907–1908, Picasso and Braque began a close working relationship that lasted until the latter went to war in 1914. Together, they developed Picasso's formal innovations by flattening pictorial space, by incorporating multiple perspectives within a single picture, and by fracturing form, all features these artists had admired in Cézanne's late paintings. According to Braque, "We were like two mountain climbers roped together."

ANALYTIC CUBISM Braque, a year younger than Picasso, was born near Le Havre, France, where he trained as a decorator. In 1900, he moved to Paris and began painting brightly colored Fauvist landscapes, but it was the 1906 Cézanne retrospective and Picasso's *Femmes d'Alger* in 1907 that established his future course by sharpening his interest in altered form and compressed space. In his landscapes after 1908, he reduced nature's complexity to its essential colors and elemental geometric shapes, but the Autumn Salon rejected his work. Matisse dismissively referred to Braque's "little cubes," and the critic Louis Vauxcelles picked up the phrase, claiming that Braque "reduced everything to cubes," thereby giving birth to the art-historical label of Cubism.

Braque's 1908–1909 **VIOLIN AND PALETTE** (FIG. 32-7) shows the kind of relatively small-scale still-life paintings that the two artists created during their initial collaborative experimentation as they moved together toward the gradual abstraction of recognizable subject matter and space. The still-life items here are not arranged in a measured progression from foreground to background depth, but push close to the picture plane, confined to a shallow space. Braque knits the various elements—a violin, an artist's palette, and some sheet music—together into a single shifting surface of forms and colors. In some areas of the painting, these formal elements have lost not only their natural spatial relations but their coherent shapes as well. Where representational motifs remain—the violin, for example—Braque fragmented them to facilitate their integration into the compositional whole.

Picasso's 1910 Cubist **PORTRAIT OF DANIEL-HENRY KAHNWEILER** (FIG. 32-8) depicts the artist's first and most important art dealer in Paris, who saved many artists from destitution by buying their early works. Kahnweiler (1884–1979) was an early champion of Picasso's art and one of the first to recognize the significance of *Femmes d'Alger*. His impressive stable of artists included—in



32-8 • Pablo Picasso PORTRAIT OF DANIEL-HENRY KAHNWEILER

1910. Oil on canvas, 39½" × 28⅝" (100.6 × 72.8 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago. Gift of Mrs. Gilbert W. Chapman in memory of Charles B. Goodspeed

addition to Picasso—Braque, André Derain, Fernand Léger, and Juan Gris. Since he was German, Kahnweiler fled France for Switzerland during World War I, while the French government confiscated all his possessions, including his stock of paintings, which was sold by the state at auction after the war. Being Jewish, he was forced into hiding during World War II.

Braque's and Picasso's paintings of 1909 and 1910 initiated what is known as Analytic Cubism because of the way the artists broke objects into parts as if to analyze them. In works of 1911 and early 1912, such as Picasso's *Ma Jolie* (see FIG. 32-1), they begin to take a somewhat different approach to the breaking up of forms, in which they did not simply fracture objects visually, but picked them apart and rearranged their components. Thus, Analytic Cubism begins to resemble the actual process of perception, during which we examine objects from various points of view and reassemble our glances into a whole object in our brain. Only Picasso and Braque reassembled their shattered subjects not according to the process of perception but conforming to principles of artistic composition, to communicate meaning rather than to represent

observed reality. For example, remnants of the subject are evident throughout Picasso's *Ma Jolie*, but any attempt to reconstruct from them the image of a woman with a stringed instrument would be misguided since the subject provided only the raw material for a formal composition. *Ma Jolie* is not a representation of a woman, a place, or an event; it is simply a painting.

SYNTHETIC CUBISM Works such as *Ma Jolie* brought Picasso and Braque to the brink of complete abstraction, but in the spring of 1912 they pulled back and began to create works that suggested more clearly discernible subjects. Neither artist wanted to break the link to reality; Picasso said that there was no such thing as completely abstract art, because "You have to start somewhere." This second major phase of Cubism is known as Synthetic Cubism because of the way the artists created complex compositions by combining and transforming individual elements, as in a chemical synthesis. Picasso's **LA BOUTEILLE DE SUZE (BOTTLE OF SUZE)** (FIG. 32-9), like many of the works he and Braque created from 1912 to 1914, is a **collage** (from the French *coller*, meaning "to glue"), a work composed of separate elements pasted



32-9 • Pablo Picasso LA BOUTEILLE DE SUZE (BOTTLE OF SUZE)

1912. Pasted paper, gouache, and charcoal, 25¾" × 19¾" (65.4 × 50.2 cm). Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Washington University in St. Louis. University purchase, Kende Sale Fund, 1946

together. At the center, assembled newsprint and construction paper suggest a tray or round table supporting a glass and a bottle of liquor with an actual label. Around this arrangement Picasso pasted larger pieces of newspaper and wallpaper.

As in earlier Cubism, Picasso offers multiple perspectives. We see the top of the blue table, tilted to face us, and simultaneously the side of the glass. The bottle stands on the table, its label facing us, while we can also see the round profile of its opening, as well as the top of the cork that plugs it. The elements together evoke not only a place—a bar—but also an activity—the viewer alone with a newspaper, enjoying a quiet drink. The newspaper clippings glued to this picture, however, disrupt the quiet mood. They address the First Balkan War of 1912–1913, which contributed to

the outbreak of World War I. Did Picasso want to underline the disorder in his art by comparing it with the disorder building in the world around him, or was he warning his viewers not to sit blindly and sip Suze while political events threatened to shatter the peaceful pleasures this work evokes? Or is this simply a painting?

Picasso employed collage three-dimensionally to produce Synthetic Cubist sculpture, such as **MANDOLIN AND CLARINET** (FIG. 32-10). Composed of wood scraps, the sculpture suggests the Cubist subject of two musical instruments, here shown at right angles to each other. Sculpture had traditionally been either carved, modeled, or cast. Picasso's sculptural collage was a new idea and introduced **assemblage**, giving sculptors the option not only of carving or modeling but also of constructing their works

by assembling found objects and unconventional materials. Another of Picasso's innovations was his introduction of space into the interior of the sculpture, created by gaps and holes. Since this sculpture creates volume by using both forms and spaces, rather than mass alone, Picasso has challenged the traditional conception of sculpture as a condensed solid form surrounded by space.

THE BRIDGE AND PRIMITIVISM

At the same time as Picasso and Braque were transforming painting in Paris, a group of radical German artists came together in Dresden as Die Brücke (The Bridge), taking their name from a passage in Friedrich Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1883) which describes contemporary humanity's potential as a "bridge" to a more perfect humanity in the future. Formed in 1905, The Bridge included architecture students Fritz Bleyl (1880–1966), Erich Heckel (1883–1970), Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880–1938), and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (1884–1976). Other German and northern European artists later joined the group, which continued until 1913. These artists hoped The Bridge would be a gathering place for "all revolutionary and surging elements" who opposed Germany's "pale, overbred, and decadent" society.

Drawing on northern visual prototypes, such as Van Gogh or Munch, and adopting traditional northern media such as woodcuts, these artists created intense, brutal, expressionistic images of alienation and anxiety in response to Germany's rapid and intensive urbanization. Not surprisingly, among their favorite motifs were the natural world and the nude body—nudism was also a growing



32-10 • Pablo Picasso MANDOLIN AND CLARINET
1913. Construction of painted wood with pencil marks, 25 $\frac{5}{8}$ " \times 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ " \times 9" (58 \times 36 \times 23 cm).
Musée Picasso, Paris.



32-11 • Erich Heckel *STANDING CHILD*
1910. Color woodcut, 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ " \times 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (37.5 \times 27.5 cm).
Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

cultural trend in Germany in those years, as city dwellers forsook the city to reconnect with nature. Erich Heckel's three-color woodcut print **STANDING CHILD** (FIG. 32-11) of 1910 presents a strikingly stylized but powerfully expressive image of a naked girl—whose flesh is the reserved color of the paper itself—isolated against a spare background landscape created from broad areas of pure black, green, and red. She stares straight out at the viewer with an incipient, but already confident, sexuality that becomes more unsettling when we learn that this girl was the 12-year old Fränzi Fehrman, a favorite of Brücke artists who, with her siblings, modeled to provide financial support for her widowed mother.

Although not part of the original Bridge group, Emil Nolde (1867–1956) joined in 1906 and quickly became its most committed member. Originally trained in industrial design, Nolde studied academic painting privately in Paris for a few months

in 1900, but he never painted as he was taught. Nolde regularly visited Parisian ethnographic museums to study the art of Africa and Oceania, which impressed him with the radical and forceful visual presence of the human figure, especially in masks. His painting **MASKS** (FIG. 32-12) of 1911 seems to derive both from what he saw in Paris, as well as the masquerades familiar to him from European carnivals (see FIG. 31-43). By merging these traditions, Nolde transforms his African and Oceanic sources into a European nightmare full of horror and implicit violence. The gaping mouths and hollow eyes of the hideously colored and roughly drawn masks taunt viewers, appearing to advance from the picture plane into their space. Nolde also uses the juxtaposition of complementaries to intensify his colors and the painting's emotionality. Nolde stopped frequenting The Bridge's studio in 1907 but remained friendly with the group's members. On the eve of World War I, Nolde accompanied a German scientific expedition to New Guinea, explaining that what attracted him to the "native art" of Pacific cultures was their "primitivism," their "absolute originality, the intense and often grotesque expression of power and life in very simple forms."

During the summers, members of The Bridge returned to nature, visiting remote areas of northern Germany, but in 1911 they moved to Berlin—perhaps preferring to imagine rather than actually live the natural life. Their images of cities, especially Berlin,



32-12 • Emil Nolde *MASKS*
1911. Oil on canvas, 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ " \times 30 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (73.03 \times 77.47 cm). The Nelson-Atkins Museum,
Kansas City, Missouri. Gift of the Friends of Art (54-90)



32-13 • Ernst Ludwig Kirchner STREET, BERLIN
1913. Oil on canvas, 47½" × 35⅞" (120.6 × 91 cm). Museum of Modern Art, New York. Purchase (274.39)

 **View** the Closer Look for *Street, Berlin* on myartslab.com

are powerfully critical of urban existence. In Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's **STREET, BERLIN** (FIG. 32-13), two prostitutes—their profession advertised by their large feathered hats and fur-trimmed coats—strut past well-dressed bourgeois men whom they view as potential clients. They seem to have deliberately embarrassed the man to their left, smirking as he hurriedly refocuses his attention on the shop window to the right. The figures are artificial and dehumanized, with masklike faces and stiff gestures. Their bodies crowd together, but they are psychologically distant. The harsh biting colors, tilted perspective, and brutal brushstrokes make this a disturbing Expressionistic image of urban degeneracy and alienation.

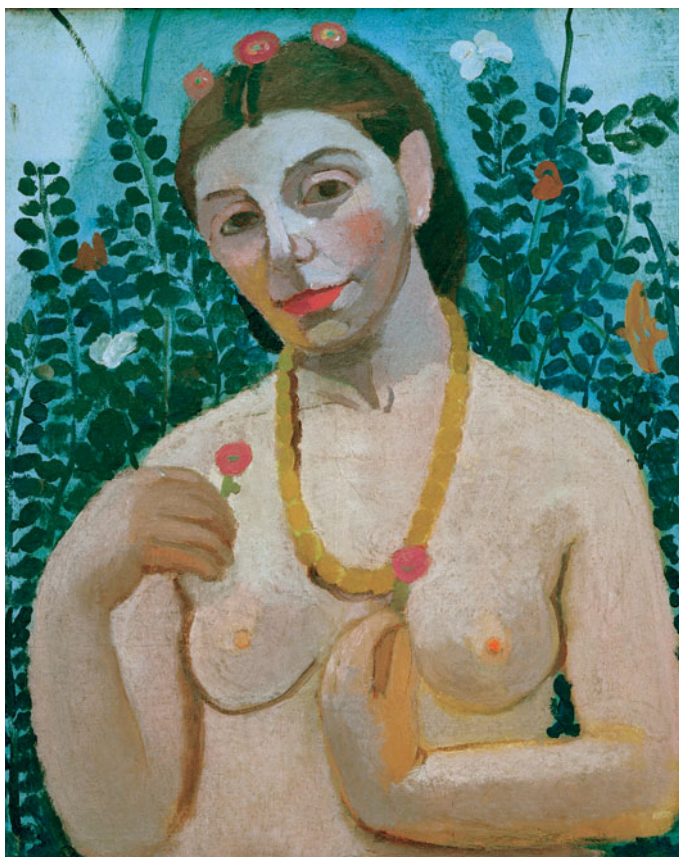
32-14 • Käthe Kollwitz THE OUTBREAK
From the *Peasants' War* series. 1903. Etching, 20" × 23⅓" (50.7 × 59.2 cm). Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

INDEPENDENT EXPRESSIONISTS

Beyond the members of The Bridge, many other artists in Germany and Austria worked Expressionistically before World War I. For example, Käthe Kollwitz (1867–1945) used her art to further working-class causes and pursue social change. She preferred printmaking because its affordability gave it the potential to reach a wide audience. Between 1902 and 1908, she produced a series of seven etchings showing the sixteenth-century German Peasants' War. **THE OUTBREAK** (FIG. 32-14), a lesson in the power of group action, portrays the ugly fury of the peasants as they charge forward armed only with their tools, bent on revenge against their oppressors for years of abuse. The faces of the two figures at the front of the charge are particularly grotesque, while the leader, Black Anna—whom Kollwitz modeled on herself—signals the attack with a fierce gesture, her arms silhouetted against the sky. Behind her, the crowded and chaotic mass of workers wielding farm tools forms a passionate picture of political revolt.

Like Kollwitz, Paula Modersohn-Becker (1876–1907) studied at the Berlin School of Art for Women. In 1898, she moved to Worpswede, an artists' retreat in rural northern Germany. Dissatisfied with the Worpswede artists' naturalistic approach to rural life, after 1900 she made four trips to Paris to view recent developments in Post-Impressionist painting. Although obviously informed by the "primitivizing" tendencies of other artists such as Gauguin (see "A Closer Look," page 1000) toward women at the time, her **SELF-PORTRAIT WITH AN AMBER NECKLACE** (FIG. 32-15) subverts those same tendencies. The monumentalized image of Modersohn-Becker seems at home within nature, surrounded by plants, holding and wearing flowers. She looks out of the canvas directly at us, calmly returning our gaze and establishing





32-15 • Paula Modersohn-Becker SELF-PORTRAIT WITH AN AMBER NECKLACE

1906. Oil on canvas, 24" × 19¾" (61 × 50 cm). Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel.

a comfortable human connection. While painted in the manner of other Modernists, her tender self-portrait reveals an artist of strong independent ideas and a woman of sharp intelligence.

In contrast, the 1911 **SELF-PORTRAIT NUDE** (FIG. 32-16) of Austrian artist Egon Schiele (1890–1918) challenges viewers with his physical and psychological torment. The impact of Schiele's father's death from untreated syphilis when the artist was just 14, led him to conflate suffering with sexuality throughout his life. In many drawings and watercolors, Schiele portrays women in demeaning, sexually explicit poses that emphasize their animal nature, and in numerous self-portraits, the artist turns the same harsh gaze upon himself, revealing deep ambivalence toward sexuality and the body. In this self-portrait he stares wildly at us with anguish, his emaciated body stretched and displayed in a halo of harsh light, lacking both hands and genitals. Some have interpreted this representational mutilation in Freudian fashion as the artist's symbolic self-punishment for indulgence in masturbation, then commonly believed to lead to insanity.

SPIRITUALISM OF THE BLUE RIDER

Formed in Munich by the Russian artist Vassily Kandinsky (1866–1944) and the German artist Franz Marc (1880–1916), Der Blaue



32-16 • Egon Schiele SELF-PORTRAIT NUDE

1911. Gouache and pencil on paper, 20¼" × 13¾" (51.4 × 35 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Bequest of Scofield Thayer, 1982 (1984.433.298)

Reiter ("The Blue Rider") was named for a popular image of a blue knight, the St. George on the city emblem of Moscow. Just as St. George had been a spiritual leader in society, so The Blue Rider aspired to offer spiritual leadership in the arts. Its first exhibition was held in December 1911 and included the work of 14 artists working in a wide range of styles, from realism to radical abstraction.

By 1911, Marc was mostly painting animals rather than humans, rendering them in big, bold forms painted in almost-primary colors. He felt animals were more "primitive" and thus purer than humans, enjoying a more spiritual relationship with nature. In **THE LARGE BLUE HORSES** (FIG. 32-17), the animals—blue, in an allusion to St. George and symbolizing natural spirituality—merge into a homogeneous whole. Their sweeping contours reflect the harmony of their collective existence and echo the curved lines of the hills behind them, suggesting that they live in harmony with their surroundings.



32-17 • Franz Marc THE LARGE BLUE HORSES
1911. Oil on canvas, 3'5 $\frac{5}{8}$ " × 5'11 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (1.05 × 1.81 m). Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.
Gift of T.B. Walker Collection, Gilbert M. Walter Fund, 1942



32-18 • Vassily Kandinsky IMPROVISATION 28 (SECOND VERSION)
1912. Oil on canvas, 43 $\frac{7}{8}$ " × 63 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (111.4 × 162.2 cm). Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Solomon R. Guggenheim Founding Collection (37.239)

 [Read](#) the document related to Vassily Kandinsky on myartslab.com

Born into a wealthy Moscow family, Kandinsky initially trained as a lawyer, but after visiting exhibitions of Modern art in Germany and taking private art lessons, he abandoned his legal career, moved to Munich, and established himself as an artist.

Kandinsky may have been a synesthete—someone who “hears” colors and “sees” sound. His art is clearly that of an artist for whom sound and color were inextricably linked. His early study of the work of Whistler (see FIG. 31-27) convinced him that the arts of painting and music were related—just as a composer organizes sound, so a painter organizes color and form. Kandinsky’s musical interests led him to contact with Austrian composer Arnold Schoenberg, who around 1910 introduced a momentous change in musical history. Since antiquity, Western music had been based on the arrangement of notes into scales, or modes (such as today’s common major and minor), chosen by composers for expressive reasons. Each note in any given scale had a role to play, and these roles operated in a clear hierarchy that served to reinforce what became known as the “tonal center,” a kind of home base or place of repose in the musical composition. Schoenberg eliminated the tonal center and treated all tones equally, denying the listener any place of repose and prolonging the expressive tension of his music indefinitely. Kandinsky wondered, if music can exist without a tonal center, can painting exist without subject matter?

Kandinsky was thus one of the first artists to investigate the theoretical possibility of purely abstract painting. Like Whistler, he gave his works musical titles, such as “Composition” and “Improvisation,” and aspired to make paintings that responded to his own inner state and would be entirely autonomous, making no reference to the visible world. In 1912, he painted a series of works, including **IMPROVISATION 28** (FIG. 32-18), that he claimed represented the first truly abstract art. In these works, colors leap and dance, expressing a variety of emotions. For Kandinsky, painting was a utopian spiritual force. He saw art’s traditional focus on accurate rendering of the physical world as a misguided materialistic quest, and he hoped that his paintings would lead humanity toward a deeper awareness of spirituality and the inner world. Rather than searching for correspondence between the painting and the world where none is intended, the artist asks us to look at the painting as if we were hearing a symphony, responding instinctively and spontaneously to this or that passage, and then to the total experience. Kandinsky further explained the musical analogy in his book *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*: “Color directly influences the soul. Color is the keyboard, the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another purposively, to cause vibrations in the soul.”

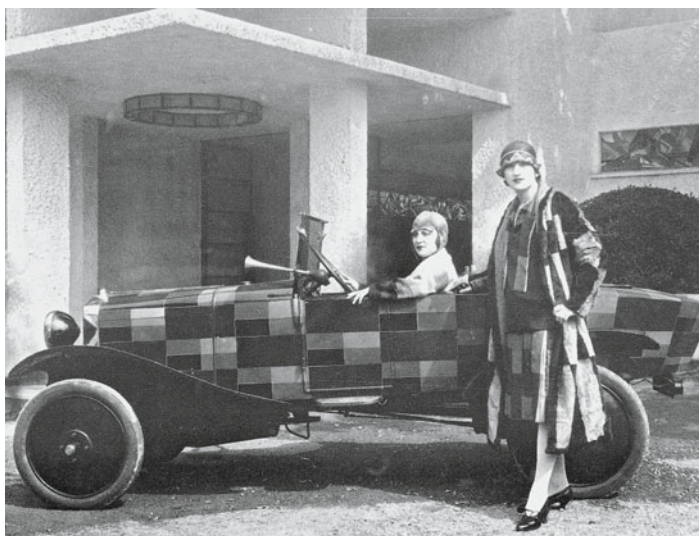
EXTENSIONS OF CUBISM

As Cubist paintings emerged from the studios of Braque and Picasso, it was clear to the art world that they had altered the artistic discourse irrevocably. Cubism’s way of viewing the world resonated with artists all over Europe, in Russia, and even in the United States. These artists interpreted Cubism in personal ways, significantly broadening and extending its visual message beyond the ideas and objects of Picasso and Braque.

FRANCE Robert Delaunay (1885–1941) and his wife, the Ukrainian-born Sonia Delaunay (1885–1979, born Sonia Stern and adopted by her uncle in 1890 as Sonia Terk; sometimes known as Sonia Delaunay-Terk), took the relatively monochromatic and static forms of Cubism in a new direction. Fauvist color inflected Delaunay’s early work; his deep interest in communicating spirituality through color led him to participate in Blue Rider exhibitions. In 1910, he began to fuse his interest in color with Cubism to create paintings celebrating the modern city and modern technology. In **HOMAGE TO BLÉRIOT** (FIG. 32-19), Delaunay pays tribute to Louis Blériot—the French pilot who in 1909 became the first person to fly across the English Channel—by portraying his airplane flying over the Eiffel Tower, the Parisian symbol of modernity. The brightly colored circular forms that fill the rest of the canvas suggest the movement of the airplane’s propeller, a blazing sun in the sky, and the great rose window of the Cathedral



32-19 • Robert Delaunay HOMAGE TO BLÉRIOT
1914. Watercolor on paper, 31" × 26" (78 × 67 cm). Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Donation of Henry-Thomas, 1976



32-20 • Sonia Delaunay CLOTHES AND CUSTOMIZED CITROËN B-12 (EXPO 1925 MANNEQUINS AVEC AUTO)
From *Maison de la Mode*. 1925.

of Notre-Dame, representing Delaunay's ideas of "progressive" science and spirituality. This painting's fractured colors also suggest the fast-moving parts of modern machinery.

The critic Guillaume Apollinaire labeled the art of both Robert and Sonia Delaunay "Orphism" after Orpheus, the legendary Greek poet whose lute playing charmed wild beasts, thus implying that their art had similar power. They preferred the term "simultaneity," a concept based on Michel-Eugène Chevreul's law of the simultaneous contrast of colors that proposed collapsing spatial distance and temporal sequence into the simultaneous "here and now" to create a harmonic unity out of the disharmonious world. They envisioned a simultaneity that combined the modern world of airplanes, telephones, and automobiles with spirituality.

Sonia Delaunay produced Orphist paintings with Robert, but she also designed fabric and clothing on her own. She created new patterns similar to Cubist paintings that she called Simultaneous Dresses and exhibited a line of inexpensive ready-to-wear garments with bold geometric designs at the important 1925 International



32-21 • Fernand Léger THREE WOMEN
1921. Oil on canvas, 6'1/2" × 8'3" (1.84 × 2.52 m). Museum of Modern Art, New York. Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund

Exposition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts, decorating a Citroën sports car to match one of her ensembles for the exhibition (FIG. 32-20). She saw the sports car as an expression of the new automobile age, because like her clothing, this car was produced inexpensively for a mass market and because the small three-seater was designed specifically to appeal to the newly independent woman of the time, Delaunay's clientele base. Sadly, there are only black-and-white photographs of these designs.

Technology also fascinated Fernand Léger (1881–1955), who painted a more static but brilliantly colored version of Cubism based on machine forms. **THREE WOMEN** (FIG. 32-21) is a Purist, machine-age version of the French academic subject of the reclining nude. Purism was developed in Paris by Le Corbusier (b. Charles-Édouard Jeanneret, 1887–1965) and Amédée Ozenfant in a 1925 book, *The Foundation of Modern Art*, that argued for a return to clear, ordered forms and ideas to express the efficient clarity of the machine age. In Léger's painting, the women's bodies are constructed from large machinelike shapes arranged in an asymmetrical geometric grid that evokes both cool Classicism and an arrangement of plumbing parts. The women are dehumanized, with identical, bland, round faces; they seem to be assembled from standard, interchangeable parts. The exuberant colors and patterns that surround them suggest an orderly industrial society in which everything has its place.

ITALY In Italy, Cubism developed into Futurism, with its emphasis on portraying technology and a sense of speed. In 1908, Italy was a state in crisis. Huge disparities of wealth separated the north from the south; four-fifths of the country was illiterate; poverty and near-starvation were rampant; and as many as 50,000 people had recently died in one of the nation's worst earthquakes. On February 20, 1909, Milanese poet and editor Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1876–1944) published "Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism" on the front page of the Parisian newspaper *Le Figaro*. He attacked everything old, dull, and "feminine," and proposed to shake Italy free of its past by embracing an exhilarating, "masculine," "futuristic," and even dangerous world based on the thrill, speed, energy, and power of modern urban life.

In April 1911, a group of Milanese artists followed Marinetti's manifesto with the "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting," in which they demanded that "all subjects previously used must be swept aside in order to express our whirling life of steel, of pride, of fever, and of speed." Some of these artists traveled to Paris for a Futurist exhibition in 1912, after which they used the visual forms of Cubism to express in art their love of machines, speed, and war.



32-22 • Gino Severini ARMORED TRAIN IN ACTION

1915. Oil on canvas, 45 $\frac{5}{8}$ " × 34 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (115.8 × 88.5 cm). Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Richard S. Zeisler (287.86)

Gino Severini (1883–1966) signed the "Technical Manifesto" while living in Paris, where he served as an intermediary between the Italian-based Futurists and the French avant-garde. Perhaps more than other Futurists, Severini embraced the concept of war as a social cleansing agent. In **ARMORED TRAIN IN ACTION** (FIG. 32-22) of 1915—probably based on a photograph of a Belgian armored car on a train going over a bridge—Severini uses the jagged forms and splintered overlapping surfaces of Cubism to describe a tumultuous scene of smoke, violence, and cannon blasts issuing from the speeding train as seen from a dizzying and disorienting viewpoint.

In 1912, Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916) argued for a Futurist "sculpture of environment," in which form should explode in a violent burst of motion from the closed and solid mass into the surrounding space. In **UNIQUE FORMS OF CONTINUITY IN SPACE** (FIG. 32-23), Boccioni portrays a figure striding powerfully through space, like the ancient *Nike (Victory) of Samothrace* (see

32-23 • Umberto Boccioni **UNIQUE FORMS OF CONTINUITY IN SPACE**
1913. Bronze, 43 $\frac{7}{8}$ " × 34 $\frac{7}{8}$ " × 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (111 × 89 × 40 cm). Museum of Modern Art,
New York. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest (231.1948)

 **Read** the document related to Futurism on myartslab.com



forms like an analytical Cubist force. Goncharova turned to mixtures of Russian folk art and Modern abstraction in costumes and sets she designed for Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes stagings, including *Le Coq d'or* (1914), *Night on Bald Mountain* (1923), and the revival of Stravinsky's *Firebird* (1926).

After 1915, Kazimir Malevich (1878–1935) emerged as the leader of the Moscow avant-garde. According to his later reminiscences, “in the year 1913, in my desperate attempt to free art from the burden of the object, I took refuge in the square form and exhibited a picture which consisted of nothing more than a black square on a white field.” *The Black Square* was one of the backdrops for Mikhail Matiushin's Russian futurist opera, *Victory Over the Sun*. At the “Last Futurist Exhibition of Paintings: 0.10,” held in St. Petersburg in the winter of 1915–1916 Malevich exhibited 39 works of art, consisting of flat, geometric shapes collaged together in a style he termed Suprematism, defined as “the supremacy of pure feeling

FIG. 5-65), with muscular forms like wings flying out energetically behind it. Many of Boccioni's sculptures made use of unconventional materials; this sculpture was actually made of plaster and only cast in bronze after the artist's death. In keeping with his Futurist ideals, Boccioni celebrated Italy's entry into World War I by enlisting. He was killed in combat.

RUSSIA By 1900, Russian artists and art collectors in the cosmopolitan cities of St. Petersburg and later Moscow had begun to embrace avant-garde art, making trips to Paris to see it. Russian artists also drew on Futurist tendencies to celebrate technology and the aesthetic of speed. In 1912, Russian Futurist artists, also known as Cubo-Futurists—claiming to have emerged independently of Italian Futurism—began to move increasingly toward abstraction.


ELECTRIC LIGHT (FIG. 32-24), painted in 1913 by Natalia Goncharova (1881–1962), shows the brightly artificial light from a new electric lamp fracturing and dissolving its surrounding

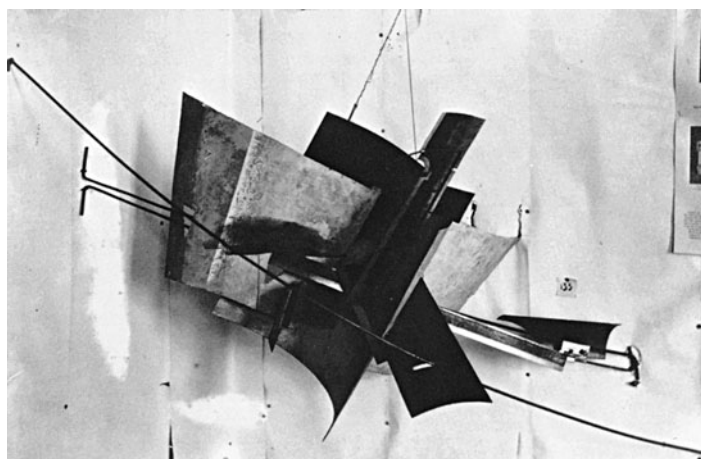
32-24 • Natalia Goncharova **ELECTRIC LIGHT**
1913. Oil on canvas, 41 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 32" (105.5 × 81.3 cm). Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou.





32-25 • Kazimir Malevich
SUPREMATIST PAINTING
(EIGHT RED RECTANGLES)
 1915. Oil on canvas, $22\frac{1}{2}'' \times 18\frac{7}{8}''$
 (57 × 48 cm). Stedelijk Museum,
 Amsterdam.

 **Read** the document
 related to Kazimir Malevich
 on myartslab.com



32-26 • Vladimir Tatlin CORNER COUNTER-RELIEF
 1915. Mixed media, $31\frac{1}{2}'' \times 59'' \times 29\frac{1}{2}''$ (80 × 150 × 75 cm).
 Present whereabouts unknown.

in creative art.” One of these works, **SUPREMATIST PAINTING (EIGHT RED RECTANGLES)** (FIG. 32-25), arranges eight red rectangles, set diagonally on a white ground—a pure abstraction.

At the same time Vladimir Tatlin (1885–1953) began to construct entirely abstract sculptures that he entitled **CORNER COUNTER-RELIEFS** (FIG. 32-26). He created these sculptures from various nonprecious, nonart materials such as metal, glass, wood, plaster, and wire. Although his move away from a conception of free-standing sculpture formed from traditional materials may have been inspired by a visit to Picasso’s studio (see FIG. 32-10), Tatlin created his new formal and conceptual language for sculpture by actively using open and negative space, eliminating sculpture’s reliance on mass and monumentality, and producing fragile and physically unstable objects that hung in the corners of rooms—the space formerly reserved for religious icons. In effect, Tatlin intended these “Counter-Reliefs” to be modern abstract replacements of the icons of the Russian Orthodox faith.



32-27 • Constantin Brancusi THE NEWBORN
1915. Marble, $5\frac{3}{4}'' \times 8\frac{1}{4}'' \times 5\frac{7}{8}''$ (14.6 × 21 × 14.8 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art. Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection. (195.134.10)

TOWARD ABSTRACTION IN TRADITIONAL SCULPTURE

It is clear that sculpture underwent a revolution as profound as that of painting in the years prior to World War I. Perhaps Picasso's creation of three-dimensional works from diverse materials, assembled and hung on a wall rather than placed on pedestals—an idea developed in Russia by Tatlin—was the most radical innovation, but not all change involved new materials and display contexts. The Romanian artist Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957), who settled in Paris in 1904 and working in Rodin's studio by 1907, became immediately captivated by the “primitive” art on display in the city. He admired the semiabstracted forms of much art beyond the Western tradition, believing that the artists who made such art succeeded in capturing the “essence” of their subject. In Brancusi's search for a sculptural essence he, like Picasso, rejected superficial realism. Brancusi wrote, “What is real is not the external form but the essence of things. Starting from this truth it is impossible for anyone to express anything essentially real by imitating its exterior surface.”

For Brancusi, the egg symbolized the potential for birth, growth, and development—the “essence” of life contained in a perfect, organic, abstract ovoid. In **THE NEWBORN** (FIG. 32-27) of 1915, he conflates its shape with the disembodied head of a human infant to suggest the essence of humanity at the moment of birth. In his 1924 **TORSO OF A YOUNG MAN** (FIG. 32-28), Brancusi distills the figure's torso and upper legs into three essential

32-28 • Constantin Brancusi TORSO OF A YOUNG MAN
1924. Bronze on stone and wood bases; combined figure and bases $40\frac{5}{8}'' \times 20'' \times 18\frac{1}{4}''$ (102.4 × 50.5 × 46.1 cm). Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.



and highly polished metal cylinders. Although its machine-like regularity might recall the works of Léger or the Futurists, this bold abstraction carries a Classical gravity and stillness, especially when perched atop the elemental earthiness of the impressive pedestal Brancusi created for it in wood and stone.

DADA: QUESTIONING ART ITSELF

When the Great War broke out in August 1914, most European leaders thought it would be over by Christmas. Both sides reassured their citizens that the efficiency of their armies and bravery of their soldiers would ensure a speedy resolution, that the political status quo would resume. These hopes proved illusory. World War I was the most brutal and costly in human history up to this time. On the Western Front in 1916 alone, Germany lost 850,000 soldiers, France 700,000, and Great Britain 400,000. The conflict settled into a vicious stalemate on all fronts as each side deployed new killing technologies, such as improved machine guns, flame throwers, fighter aircraft, and poison gas. On the home front, governments exerted control over industry and labor to manage the war effort, and ordinary people were forced to endure food rationing, propaganda attacks, and shameless war profiteering.

Horror at the enormity of the carnage arose on many fronts. One of the first artistic movements to address the slaughter and the moral questions it posed was Dada—a transnational movement with distinct local manifestations that arose almost simultaneously in Zürich, New York, Paris, and Berlin. If Modern art until that time questioned the traditions of art, Dada went further to question the concept of art itself. Witnessing how thoughtlessly life was discarded in the trenches, Dada mocked the senselessness of rational thought and even the foundations of modern society. It embraced a “mocking iconoclasm,” even in its name, which has no real or fixed meaning. *Dada* is baby talk in German; in French it means “hobbyhorse”; in Romanian and Russian, “yes, yes”; in the Kru African dialect, “the tail of a sacred cow.” Dada artists annihilated the conventional understanding of art as something precious, replacing it with a strange and irrational art about ideas and actions rather than about objects.

HUGO BALL AND THE CABARET VOLTAIRE Dada’s opening moment was probably the first performance of poet Hugo Ball’s poem “Karawane” at the Cabaret Voltaire. Ball (1886–1927) and his companion, Emmy Hennings (d. 1949), a nightclub singer, moved from Germany to neutral Switzerland when World War I broke out and opened the Cabaret Voltaire in Zürich on February 5, 1916. Cabaret Voltaire was based loosely on the bohemian artists’ cafés of prewar Berlin and Munich, and its mad irrational world became a meeting place for exiled avant-garde writers and artists of various nationalities who shared Ball’s and Hennings’s disgust for the war.

It was here that Ball solemnly recited one of his sound poems, “**KARAWANE**” (FIG. 32-29), wearing a strange costume, with his legs and body encased in blue cardboard tubes and



32-29 • HUGO BALL RECITING THE SOUND POEM “KARAWANE”

Photographed at the Cabaret Voltaire, Zürich. 1916.

a white-and-blue “witch doctor’s hat,” as he called it, on his head. He also wore a huge, gold-painted cardboard cape that flapped when he moved his arms and lobsterlike cardboard hands or claws. The text of Ball’s poem—included in the photograph documenting the event—consists of a string of nonsensical sounds, renouncing “the language devastated and made impossible by journalism,” and mocking traditional poetry. He self-consciously abandoned the rationality of adulthood and created a new, and wholly incomprehensible private language of random sounds that seemed to mimic baby talk.

MARCEL DUCHAMP Although not formally a member of the movement, Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968) created some of Dada’s most complex and challenging works. He also took Dada to New York when he crossed the Atlantic in 1915 to escape the war in Europe. In Paris in 1912, Duchamp had experimented with Cubism, painting *Nude Descending a Staircase No. 2*, one of the most controversial works to be included later in the Armory Show (see page 1041). But by the time Duchamp arrived in the



32-30 • Marcel Duchamp **FOUNTAIN**

1917. Porcelain plumbing fixture and enamel paint. Photograph by Alfred Stieglitz. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania. Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection (1998-74-1)

Stieglitz's photograph is the only known image of Duchamp's original *Fountain*, which mysteriously disappeared after it was rejected by the jury of the American Society of Independent Artists exhibition. In 1950, Duchamp produced several replicas of the lost original simply by buying more urinals and signing them "R. Mutt/1917." One of these replicas sold at auction in 1999 for \$1.76 million, setting a record for a work by Duchamp.

 **Watch** a video about Marcel Duchamp on myartslab.com

United States, he had discarded painting, which he claimed had become for him a mindless activity, and had devised the Dada genre that he termed the **readymade**, in which he transformed ordinary, often manufactured objects into works of art.

Duchamp was warmly welcomed into the American art world. The American Society of Independent Artists invited him to become a founding member, and he chaired the hanging committee for its first annual "Forum" exhibition in 1917. The show advertised itself as unjuried—any work of art submitted with the entry fee of \$6 would be hung. Yet, in Dada fashion, Duchamp spent almost two years devising a work of art that would be shocking and offensive enough to be rejected, thus commenting on the contemporary process of art making and its exhibition. His anonymous submission was a common porcelain urinal that he purchased from a plumber, which he turned on one side so that it was no longer functional and signed "R. Mutt" in a play on the name of the urinal's manufacturer, J. L. Mott Iron Works. It was indeed rejected.

FOUNTAIN (FIG. 32-30) remains one of the most controversial works of art of the twentieth century. *It* is transgressive. It incites laughter, anger, embarrassment, and disgust, by openly referring to private bathroom activities, to human carnality and vulnerability. In it Duchamp questions the very essence of what constitutes a work of art. How much can be stripped away before the essence of art disappears? Since Whistler's famous court case (see "Art on Trial in 1877," page 985), most avant-garde artists agreed that a work of art need be neither descriptive nor well-crafted but, before 1917, none would have argued, as Duchamp does in this piece, that "art" was primarily conceptual. For centuries, perhaps millennia, artists had regularly employed studio assistants to craft parts, if not all, of the art objects that they designed. On one level, Duchamp updated that practice into modern terms by arguing that art objects might not only be crafted (in part) by others, but that the objects of art could actually be mass-produced



32-31 • Marcel Duchamp **L.H.O.O.Q.**

1919. Pencil on reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, $7\frac{3}{4}$ " × $4\frac{3}{4}$ " (19.7 × 12.1 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania. Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection

for the artist by industry. In a clever twist of logic, Duchamp simultaneously creates a commentary on consumption and on the irrationality of the modern age by arguing that the “readymade” work of art, as a manufactured object, simply bypasses the craft tradition, qualifying as a work of art through human conceptualization rather than by human facture.

When *Fountain* was rejected, as Duchamp anticipated it would be, the artist resigned from the Society of Independent Artists in mock horror, and published an unsigned editorial in a Dada journal detailing what he described as the scandal of the R. Mutt case. He wrote: “The only works of art America has given are her plumbing and bridges,” adding, “Whether Mr. Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He **CHOSE** it. He took an ordinary article of life, placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view—created a new thought for that object.”

After Duchamp returned to Paris, he challenged the French art world with a work that he entitled **L.H.O.O.Q.** (FIG. 32-31) and described as a “modified readymade.” In 1911, a Louvre employee had stolen Leonardo’s famous *Mona Lisa* (see FIG. 21-5), believing it should be returned to Italy. It took two years to recover it. While missing, however, the *Mona Lisa* became even more famous and was widely and badly reproduced on postcards and posters, and in advertising. In his work, Duchamp chose to comment on the nature of fame and on the degraded image of the *Mona Lisa* by purchasing a cheap postcard reproduction and drawing a mustache and beard on her famously enigmatic face. In doing so he turned a sacred cultural artifact into an object of crude ridicule. The letters that he scrawled across the bottom of the card, “L.H.O.O.Q.,” when read aloud sound phonetically similar to the French slang phrase *elle a chaud au cul*, politely translated as “she’s hot for it,” thus adding a crude sexual innuendo to the already cheapened image. Like *Fountain*, this work challenges preconceived notions about what constitutes art and introduces ridicule and crude bodily functions as viable artistic content. As one of Dada’s founders said: “Dada was born of disgust.”

Duchamp made only a few readymades. In fact, he created very little art at all after about 1922, when he devoted himself almost entirely to chess. When asked about his occupation, he described himself as a “retired artist,” but his early twentieth-century radical ideas about art continue to exert influence, especially since around 1960.

BERLIN DADA Early in 1917, Hugo Ball and the Romanian-born poet Tristan Tzara (1896–1963) organized the Galerie Dada in Zürich. Tzara also edited the magazine *Dada*, which quickly attracted the attention of like-minded artists and writers in several European capitals and in the United States. The movement spread farther when expatriate members of Hugo Ball’s circle in Switzerland returned to their homelands after the war. Richard Huelsenbeck (1892–1974), for instance, took Dada to Germany, where he helped found the Club Dada in Berlin in April 1918.



32-32 • Kurt Schwitters MERZBILD 5B (PICTURE-RED-HEART-CHURCH)


April 26, 1919. Collage, tempera, and crayon on cardboard, 32 $\frac{7}{8}$ " × 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (83.4 × 60.3 cm). Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. (52.1325)

Dada pursued a slightly different agenda and took on different forms in each of its major centers. One distinctive feature of Berlin Dada was its agitprop agenda. Compared to the more literary forms of Dada elsewhere, Berlin Dada also produced an unusually large amount of visual art—especially collage and **photomontage** (photographic collage).

Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948), for instance, who met Huelsenbeck and other Dadaists in 1919, used discarded rail tickets, postage stamps, ration coupons, beer labels, and other street detritus to create visual poetry. Schwitters termed his two- and three-dimensional works of art, made out of the wasted ephemera of the industrial world, *Merzbilder* (German for “refuse picture”). In these works Schwitters combines fragments of newspaper and other printed material with drawn or painted images. He wrote that garbage demanded equal rights with painting. In **MERZBILD 5B** (FIG. 32-32), Schwitters’s collage includes printed fragments from the street with newspaper scraps to comment on the postwar disorder of defeated Germany. One fragment describes the brutal overthrow of the short-lived socialist republic in Bremen.



32-33 • Hannah Höch CUT WITH THE DADA KITCHEN KNIFE THROUGH THE LAST WEIMAR BEER-BELLY CULTURAL EPOCH IN GERMANY
1919. Collage, 44 $\frac{7}{8}$ " × 35 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (114 × 90 cm).
Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

 **Read** the document related to Hannah Höch on myartslab.com

Hannah Höch (1889–1978) produced even more pointed political photomontages. Between 1916 and 1926, she worked for Verlag, Berlin's largest publishing house, designing decorative patterns and writing articles on crafts for a women's magazine. Höch considered herself part of the women's movement in the 1920s. She disapproved of contemporary mass-media representations of women and had to fight for her place as the sole woman among the Berlin Dada group, one of whom described her contribution disparagingly as merely conjuring up beer and sandwiches. In **CUT WITH THE DADA KITCHEN KNIFE THROUGH THE LAST WEIMAR BEER-BELLY CULTURAL EPOCH IN GERMANY** (FIG. 32-33), Höch combines images and words from the popular press, political posters, and photographs to create a complex and angry critique of the Weimar Republic in 1919. She shows women physically cutting apart the beer-bloated German establishment in this photomontage and includes portraits of androgynous Dada characters, such as herself and several other Berlin Dada

artists, along with Marx and Lenin. It is tempting to wonder which side she really thinks her fellow Dadaists stand on.

MODERNIST TENDENCIES IN AMERICA

When avant-garde Modern art was first widely exhibited in the United States, it received a cool welcome. While some American artists did work in abstract or Modern ways, most preferred to work in a more naturalistic manner, at least until around 1915.

STIEGLITZ AND THE "291" GALLERY

The chief proponent of European Modernism in the United States was the photographer Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946), who in the years before World War I organized several small exhibitions featuring the art of major Modernists at a tiny gallery at 291 Fifth

Avenue, known simply as 291. Stieglitz, like Kahnweiler in Paris, supported many of the early American Modernist artists in New York. As a photographer himself, he sought to establish the legitimacy of photography as a fine art with these exhibitions.

Born in New Jersey to a wealthy German immigrant family, Stieglitz studied photography in the 1880s at the Technische

Hochschule in Berlin, quickly recognizing photography's artistic potential. In 1890, he began to photograph New York City street scenes. He promoted his views through an organization called the Photo-Secession, founded in 1902, and two years later opened the 291 gallery. By 1910, this gallery had become a focal point for both photographers and painters, with Stieglitz giving shows (sometimes their first) to artists such as Arthur Dove, John Marin, and Georgia O'Keeffe, and bringing to America the art of European artists such as Kandinsky, Braque, Cézanne, and Rodin.

In his own photographs, Stieglitz tried to compose poetic images of romanticized urban scenes. In **THE FLATIRON BUILDING (FIG. 32-34)**, the tree trunk to the right is echoed by branches in the grove farther back, and in the wedge-shaped Flatiron Building to the rear. The entire scene is suffused with a misty wintery atmosphere, which the artist created by manipulating his viewpoint, exposure, and possibly both the negative and positive images. Ironically, Stieglitz softens and romanticizes the Flatiron Building, one of New York's earliest skyscrapers and a symbol of the city's modernity. The magazine *Camera Work*, a high-quality photographic publication that Stieglitz edited, and which published this photograph in photogravure form in 1903, also featured numerous photogravures of American and European Modernist art as well as some important American Modern art criticism.

THE ARMORY SHOW AND HOME-GROWN MODERNISM

In 1913, Modernist art arrived in New York en masse with an enormous exhibition held in the drill hall of the 69th Regiment Armory on Lexington Avenue between 25th and 26th Streets. Walt Kuhn (1877–1949) and Arthur B. Davies (1862–1928) were the principal organizers of the “Armory Show,” which featured more than 1,600 works, a quarter of them by European artists. Most of the art, even the Modernist art, was well received and sold well, but the art of a few European Modernists, including Matisse and Duchamp in particular, caused a public outcry, in which they were described as “cousins to the anarchists.” When selected works from the exhibition traveled on to Chicago, a few faculty and some students of the School of the Art Institute even hanged Matisse in effigy, while civic leaders called for a morals commission to investigate the show. Yet the exhibition consolidated American Modernist art and inspired its artists, who subsequently found more enthusiastic collectors and exhibition venues.

One of the most significant early American Modernists was Arthur Dove (1880–1946). Dove studied the work of the Fauves in Europe in 1907–1909, and he even exhibited at the Autumn Salon. After returning home, he began painting abstract nature studies about the same time as Kandinsky, although each was unaware of the other. Dove's **NATURE SYMBOLIZED NO. 2 (FIG. 32-35)** is one of a remarkable series of small works that reveals his beliefs about the spiritual power of nature. But while Kandinsky's art focuses on an inner vision of nature, Dove abstract paintings reflect his deeply felt experience of the landscape itself, saying that



32-34 • Alfred Stieglitz THE FLATIRON BUILDING, NEW YORK
1903. Photogravure, 6 $\frac{1}{16}$ " \times 3 $\frac{5}{16}$ " (17 \times 8.4 cm) mounted. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of J.B. Neumann, 1958 (58.577.37)

A CLOSER LOOK | *Portrait of a German Officer*

by Marsden Hartley. 1914. Oil on canvas, 68 $\frac{1}{4}$ " × 41 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (1.78 × 1.05 m).

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949 (49.70.42)

Symbolic references to Freyburg include epaulettes, lance tips, and the Iron Cross he was awarded the day before he was killed.

Freyburg's regiment number ("4") is shown at the center of the abstracted chest along with a red cursive "E," which stands for "Edmund" (Hartley's given name). This places Hartley over Freyburg's heart.

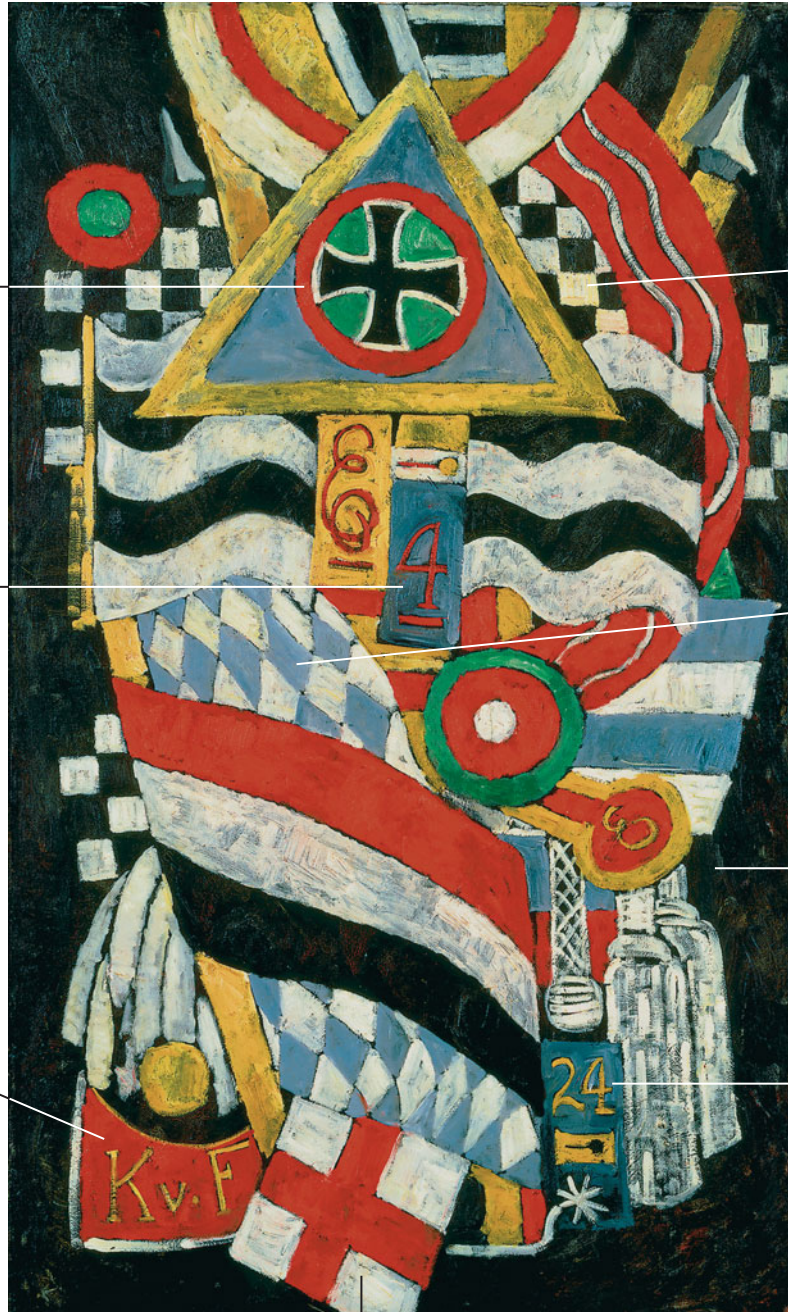
Hartley identifies his subject with his initials ("Kv.F") in gold on red.

The black-and-white checkerboard patterns represent Freyburg's love of chess.


The blue-and-white diamond pattern comes from the Bavarian flag; the red, white, and black bands constitute the flag of the German Empire, adopted in 1871; and the black-and-white stripes are those of the historic flag of Prussia.

The funereal black background heightens the intensity of the foreground colors.

The young man's age ("24") is noted in gold on blue.



While living in Berlin in 1914, Hartley fell in love with a young Prussian lieutenant, Karl von Freyburg, whom Hartley described as "in every way a perfect being—physically, spiritually, and mentally." Freyburg's death in World War I devastated Hartley, who memorialized his fallen lover in this symbolic portrait.

 [View](#) the Closer Look for *Portrait of a German Officer* on myartslab.com



32-35 • Arthur Dove NATURE SYMBOLIZED NO. 2
c. 1911. Pastel on paper, 18" × 21 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (45.8 × 55 cm). The Art Institute of Chicago. Alfred Stieglitz Collection (1949.533)

he had "no [artistic] background except perhaps the woods, running streams, hunting, fishing, camping, the sky." Dove supported himself by farming in rural Connecticut, but he exhibited his art in New York and was both well received by and well connected to the New York art community.

Another pioneer of American Modernism who exhibited at the Armory Show was Marsden Hartley (1877–1943), who was also a regular exhibitor at the 291 gallery. Between 1912 and 1915, Hartley lived mostly abroad, first in Paris, where he discovered Cubism, then in Berlin, where he began to paint colorful Expressionistic art. Around 1914, however, Hartley developed a powerfully original and intense style of his own in *Portrait of a German Officer* (see "A Closer Look," opposite), a tightly arranged composition of boldly colored shapes and patterns, interspersed with numbers, letters, and fragments of German military imagery that symbolically memorialize Hartley's fallen lover, a tragic victim of the war.

Stieglitz "discovered" Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986)—born in rural Wisconsin, and already studying and teaching art between 1905 and 1915—when a New York friend showed him some of her charcoal drawings. Stieglitz's reported response: "At last, a woman on paper!" In 1916, he included O'Keeffe's work in a group show at 291 and mounted her first solo exhibition the following year. O'Keeffe moved to New York in 1918 and married Stieglitz in 1924. In 1925, she began to paint New York skyscrapers, which were acclaimed at the time as embodiments of American inventiveness and energy. But paintings such as **CITY NIGHT** (FIG. 32-36) are not unambiguous celebrations of lofty buildings. She portrays the skyscrapers from a low vantage point so that they appear to loom ominously over the viewer; their dark tonalities,



32-36 • Georgia O'Keeffe CITY NIGHT
1926. Oil on canvas, 48" × 30" (123 × 76.9 cm). Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Gift of funds from the Regis Corporation, Mr. and Mrs. W. John Driscoll, the Beim Foundation, the Larsen Fund (80.28)

stark forms, and exaggerated perspective produce a sense of menace that also appears in the art of other American Modernists.

In 1925, O'Keeffe also began to exhibit a series of close-up paintings of flowers that have become her best-known subjects. In **RED CANNA** (FIG. 32-37), O'Keeffe brings the heart of the heavy sensual flower to the front and center of the picture plane, revealing its tender inner forms and soft, delicate surfaces. By painting the flower's hidden organic energy rather than the way it actually looks to a distant viewer, she creates from it a new abstract beauty, distilling the pure vigor of the plant's life force. Critics described O'Keeffe's flower paintings as elementally feminine and vaginal, and Stieglitz did little to dissuade viewers from this reading of O'Keeffe's art. In fact, he promoted it, in spite of O'Keeffe's strenuous objections to this critical caricature and its implicit pigeonholing of her as a "woman artist." In 1929, O'Keeffe began



32-37 • Georgia O'Keeffe RED CANNA

1924. Oil on canvas mounted on Masonite, 36" × 29⁷/₈" (91.44 × 75.88 cm). Collection of the University of Arizona Museum of Art, Tucson. Gift of Oliver James (1950.1.4)

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32-38 • Edward Weston SUCCULENT

1930. Gelatin-silver print, 7¹/₂" × 9¹/₂" (19.1 × 24 cm). Collection Center for Creative Photography © 1981 Arizona Board of Regents.

spending summers in New Mexico and moved there permanently in the 1940s, dedicating her art to evocative representations of the local landscape and culture.

California artist Edward Weston (1886–1958) followed in O'Keeffe's footsteps with a series of experimental photographs begun in the late 1920s that emphasize the abstract patterns of plants by zooming in to extract them from their natural context. During a trip to New York in 1922, Weston had met O'Keeffe, as well as fellow photographers Stieglitz and Paul Strand (1890–1976), both kindred spirits in his own journey to claim photography as a legitimate medium of high art, capable of abstraction as well as documentation. In **SUCCULENT** (FIG. 32-38), Weston used straightforward camera work without any manipulation in the dark-room to portray his subject with startlingly crisp detail, well captured on his large-format glass negative. He argued that although the camera sees more than the human eye, the quality of the photographic image rests solely on the artistic choices made by the photographer.

EARLY MODERN ARCHITECTURE

New industrial materials and engineering innovations enabled twentieth-century architects to create tall buildings of unprecedented height that vastly increased the usable space in structures built on scarce and valuable city lots. At

the same time that Modern artists in Europe rejected the decorative in painting and sculpture, American architects increasingly embraced the plain geometric shapes and undecorated surfaces of skyscraper architecture.

EUROPEAN MODERNISM

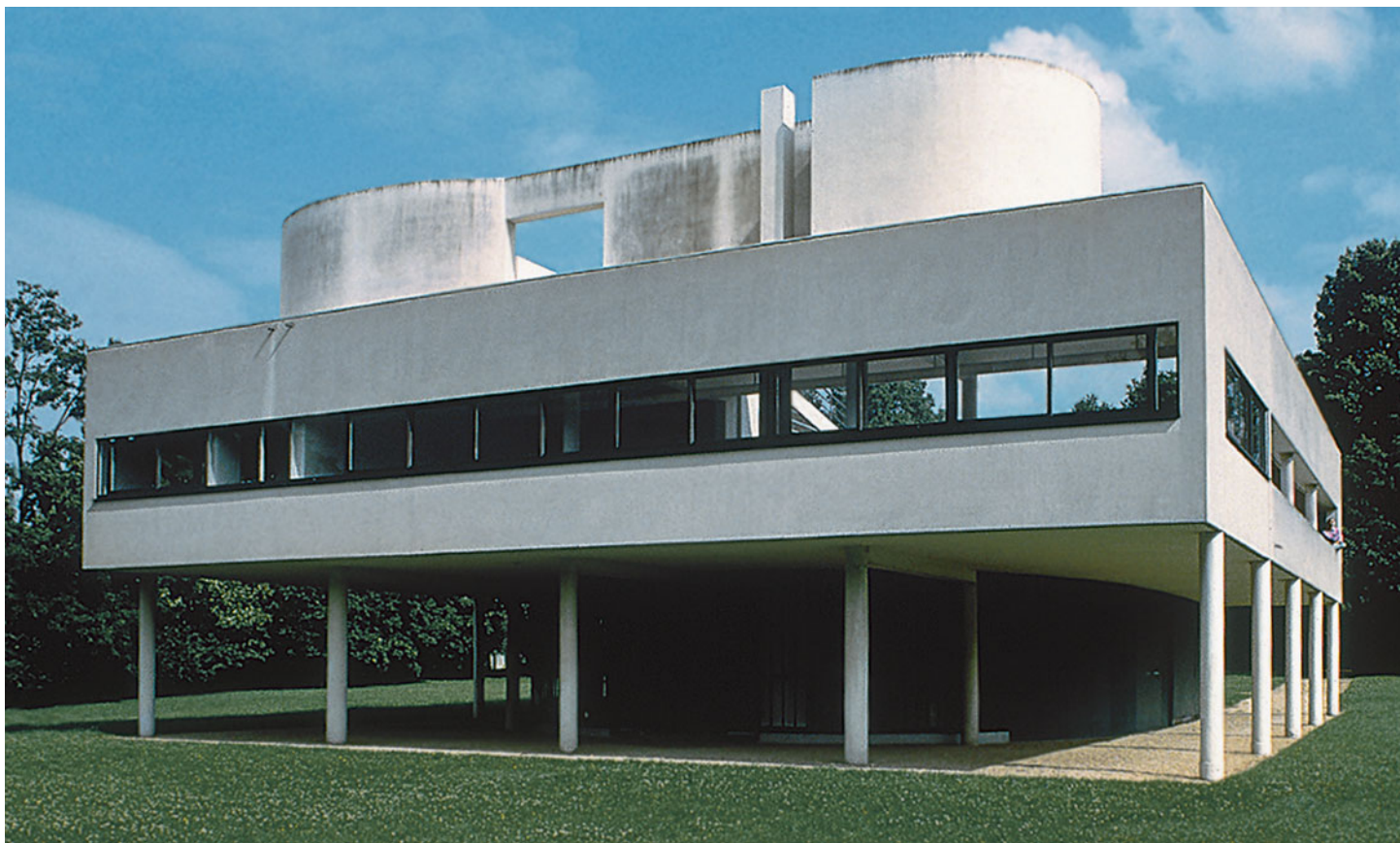
In Europe, a stripped-down and severely geometric style of Modern architecture developed, partly in reaction to the natural organic lines of Art Nouveau. In Vienna, Adolf Loos (1870–1933), one of the pioneers of European architectural Modernism, insisted in his 1913 essay "Ornament and Crime" that "The evolution of a culture is synonymous with the removal of ornament from utilitarian objects." For Loos, ornament was a sign of cultural degeneracy. Thus his **STEINER HOUSE** (FIG. 32-39) is a stucco-covered, reinforced concrete construction without decorative embellishment. The rectangular windows, for instance, are completely plain, and they were arranged only in relation to the functional demands of interior spaces. Loos argued that the only purpose of



32-39 • Adolf Loos STEINER HOUSE, VIENNA
1910.

a building's interior was to provide protection from the elements.

The most important French Modern architect was Le Corbusier, who established several important precepts that influenced architects for the next half-century. His **VILLA SAVOYE** (FIG. 32-40), a private home outside Paris, became an icon of the International Style (see “The International Style,” page 1057) and reflects his Purist ideals in its geometric design and avoidance of ornamentation. It is also one of the best expressions of Le Corbusier’s **domino construction** system, first elaborated in 1914, in which slabs of ferroconcrete (concrete reinforced with steel bars) rest on six free-standing steel posts, placed at the positions of the six dots on a domino playing piece. Over the next decade Le Corbusier further explored the possibilities of the domino system and in 1926 published “The Five Points of a New Architecture,” in which he proposed raising houses above the ground on pilotis (free-standing posts); using flat roofs as terraces; using movable partition walls slotted between supports on the interior and **curtain walls** (nonload-bearing



32-40 • Le Corbusier VILLA SAVOYE, POISSY-SUR-SEINE
France. 1929–1930.

✱ **Explore** the architectural panoramas of the Villa Savoye on myartslab.com

walls) on the exterior to allow greater design flexibility; and using ribbon windows (windows that run the length of the wall). These became common features of Modern architecture. Le Corbusier described the Villa Savoye as “a machine for living in,” meaning that it was designed as rationally and functionally as an automobile or a machine. After World War I—like his fellow Modern architects—Le Corbusier also developed designs for mass-produced standardized housing to help rebuild Europe’s destroyed infrastructure.

AMERICAN MODERNISM

CONNECTION TO THE LAND Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959) was not only America’s most important Modern architect, he was also one of the most influential architects in the world during the early twentieth century. After briefly studying engineering at the University of Wisconsin, Wright apprenticed to a Chicago architect, then spent five years with the firm of Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan (see FIG. 31-55), advancing to the post of chief drafter. In 1893, Wright established his own office, specializing in domestic architecture. Around 1900, he and several other architects in the Oak Park suburb of Chicago—together known as the Prairie School—began to design low, horizontal houses with flat roofs and heavy overhangs that echoed the flat plains of the prairie in the Midwest.

The **FREDERICK C. ROBIE HOUSE** (FIG. 32-41) is one of Wright’s early **Prairie Style** masterpieces. A central chimney, above a fireplace that radiated heat throughout the house in the bitter Chicago winter, forms the center of the sprawling design.

Low, flat overhanging roofs—dramatically cantilevered on both sides of the chimney—shade against the summer sun, and open porches provide places to sleep outside in cool summer nights. Low bands of windows—many with stained glass—surround the house, creating a colored screen between the interior and the outside world, while also inviting those inside to look through the windows into the garden beyond.

The main story is one long space divided into living and dining areas by a free-standing fireplace. There are no dividing walls. Wright had visited the Japanese exhibit at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair and was deeply influenced by the aesthetics of Japanese architecture, particularly its sense of space and screenlike windows (see “*Shoin Design*,” page 821). Wright’s homes frequently featured built-in closets and bookcases, and he hid heating and lighting fixtures when possible. He also designed and arranged the furniture for his interiors (FIG. 32-42). Here, machine-cut components create the chairs’ modern geometric designs, while their high backs huddle around the table to form the intimate effect of a room within a room. Wright integrated lights and flower holders into the posts closest to the table’s corners so that there would no need for lights or flowers on the table.

Wright had an uneasy relationship with European Modernist architecture; he was uninterested in the machine aesthetic of Le Corbusier. Although he routinely used new building materials such as ferroconcrete, plate glass, and steel, he sought to maintain a natural sensibility, connecting his buildings to their sites by using brick and local wood or stone. **FALLINGWATER** (FIG. 32-43) in rural Pennsylvania is a prime example of this practice. It is also



32-41 • Frank Lloyd Wright FREDERICK C. ROBIE HOUSE, CHICAGO
1906–1909. Chicago History Museum. (HB-19312A2)



32-42 • Frank Lloyd Wright
Wright COLOR
RECONSTRUCTION OF
THE DINING ROOM,
FREDERICK C. ROBIE
HOUSE



32-43 • Frank Lloyd Wright **FALLINGWATER (EDGAR KAUFMANN HOUSE), MILL RUN**
 Pennsylvania. 1937.

✱ **Explore** the architectural panoramas of Fallingwater on myartslab.com



32-44 • Mary Colter LOOKOUT STUDIO, GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK
 Arizona. 1914. Grand Canyon National Park Museum Collection.

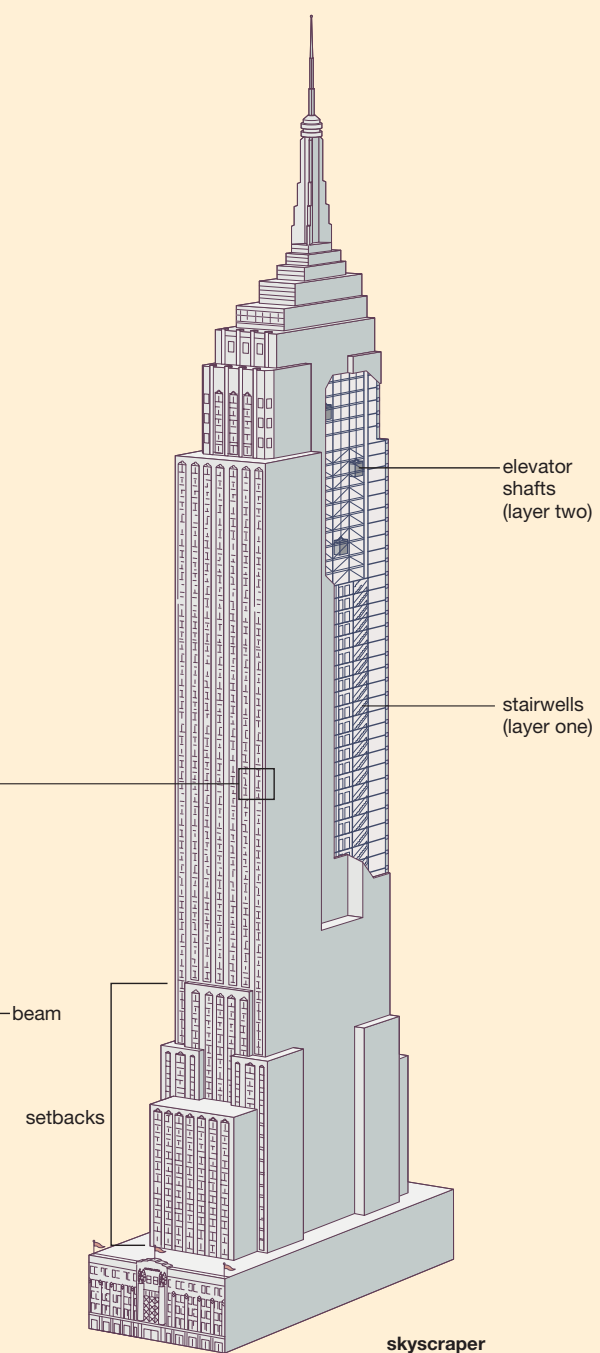
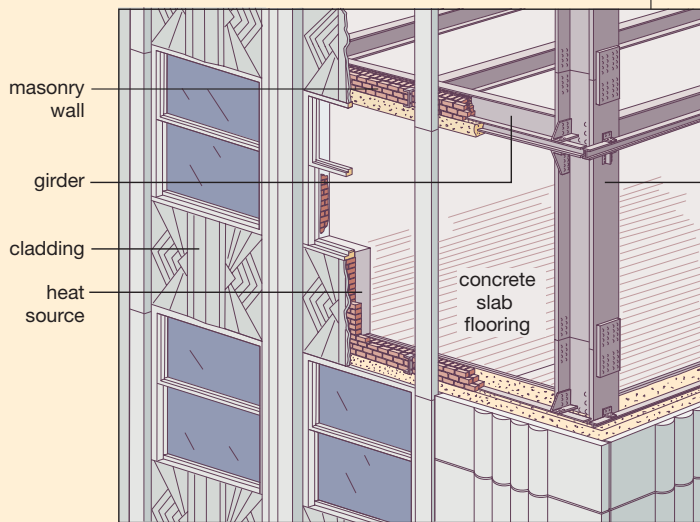
the most famous expression of Wright's conviction that buildings should not simply sit *on* the landscape but coordinate *with* it.


Fallingwater was commissioned by Edgar Kaufmann, a Pittsburgh department-store owner, to replace a family summer cottage on the site of a waterfall and a pool where his children played. To Kaufmann's surprise, Wright decided to build the new house right into the cliff and over the pool, allowing the waterfall to flow around and under the house. A large boulder where the family had sunbathed in the summers was used for the central hearthstone of the fireplace. In a dramatic move that engineers questioned (with reason, as subsequent history has shown), Wright used cantilevers to extend a series of broad concrete terraces out from the cliff to parallel the great slabs of natural rock below. Poured concrete forms the terraces, but Wright painted the material a soft earth tone. Long bands of windows and glass doors offer spectacular views, uniting woods, water, and house. Such houses do not simply testify to the ideal of living in harmony with nature; they declare war on the modern city. When asked what could

be done to improve city architecture, Wright responded: "Tear it down."

Mary Colter (1869–1958) expressed an even stronger connection to the landscape in her architecture. Born in Pittsburgh and educated at the California School of Design in San Francisco, she spent much of her career as architect and decorator for the Fred Harvey Company, a firm in the Southwest that catered to the tourist trade. Colter was an avid student of Native American arts, and her buildings quoted liberally from Puebloan traditions, notably in the use of exposed logs for structural supports. She designed several visitor facilities at Grand Canyon National Park, of which **LOOKOUT STUDIO (FIG. 32-44)** is the most dramatic. Built on the edge of the canyon's south rim, the building's foundation is in natural rock, and its walls are built from local stone. The roofline is deliberately irregular to echo the surrounding canyon wall. The only concession to modernity is a liberal use of glass windows and a smooth cement floor. Colter's designs for hotels and railroad stations throughout the region helped establish the distinctive Southwest style.

The development of the skyscraper design and aesthetic depended on several things: The use of metal beams and girders for the structural-support skeleton; the separation of the building-support structure from the enclosing wall layer (the cladding); the use of fireproof materials and measures; the use of elevators; and the overall integration of plumbing, central heating, artificial lighting, and ventilation systems. The first generation of skyscrapers, built between about 1880 and 1900, were concentrated in the Midwest, chiefly in Chicago and St. Louis (see FIG. 31–55). Second-generation skyscrapers, mostly with over 20 stories, date from after 1895 and are found more frequently in New York. The first tall buildings were free-standing towers, sometimes with a base, such as the Woolworth Building of 1911–1913 (see FIG. 32–45). New York City’s Building Zone Resolution of 1916 introduced mandatory setbacks—decreases in girth as the building rose—to ensure light and ventilation to adjacent sites. Built in 1931, the 1,250-foot setback form of the Empire State Building, diagrammed here, has a streamlined design. The Art Deco exterior cladding (see inset below) conceals the structural elements and mechanisms such as elevators that make its great height possible. The Empire State Building was the tallest building in the world when it was built and its distinctive profile ensures that it remains one of the most recognizable even today.



 **Watch** an architectural simulation about skyscraper construction on myartslab.com

THE AMERICAN SKYSCRAPER After 1900, New York City assumed a lead over Chicago in the development of the skyscraper, whose soaring height was made possible by the use of the steel-frame skeleton for structural support (see “The Skyscraper,” above). New York clients, however, rejected the more utilitarian Chicago style of Louis Sullivan and others, preferring the historicizing approach then still popular on the east coast. The **WOOL-**

WORTH BUILDING (FIG. 32–45) of 1911–1913, designed by the Minnesota-based firm of Cass Gilbert (1859–1934), was the world’s tallest building at 792 feet and 55 floors when first completed. Its Gothic-style external details, inspired by the soaring towers of late medieval churches, gave the building a strong visual personality. Because of its Gothic style, Gilbert called it his “Cathedral of Commerce.”



32-45 • Cass Gilbert WOOLWORTH BUILDING, NEW YORK
1911–1913.

ART BETWEEN THE WARS IN EUROPE

World War I had a devastating effect on Europe's artists and architects. Many responded to the destruction and loss of a generation of young men by criticizing the European tradition, while others concentrated on rebuilding. Either way, much of the art created between 1919 and 1939 addressed directly the needs and concerns of society in turmoil or transition.

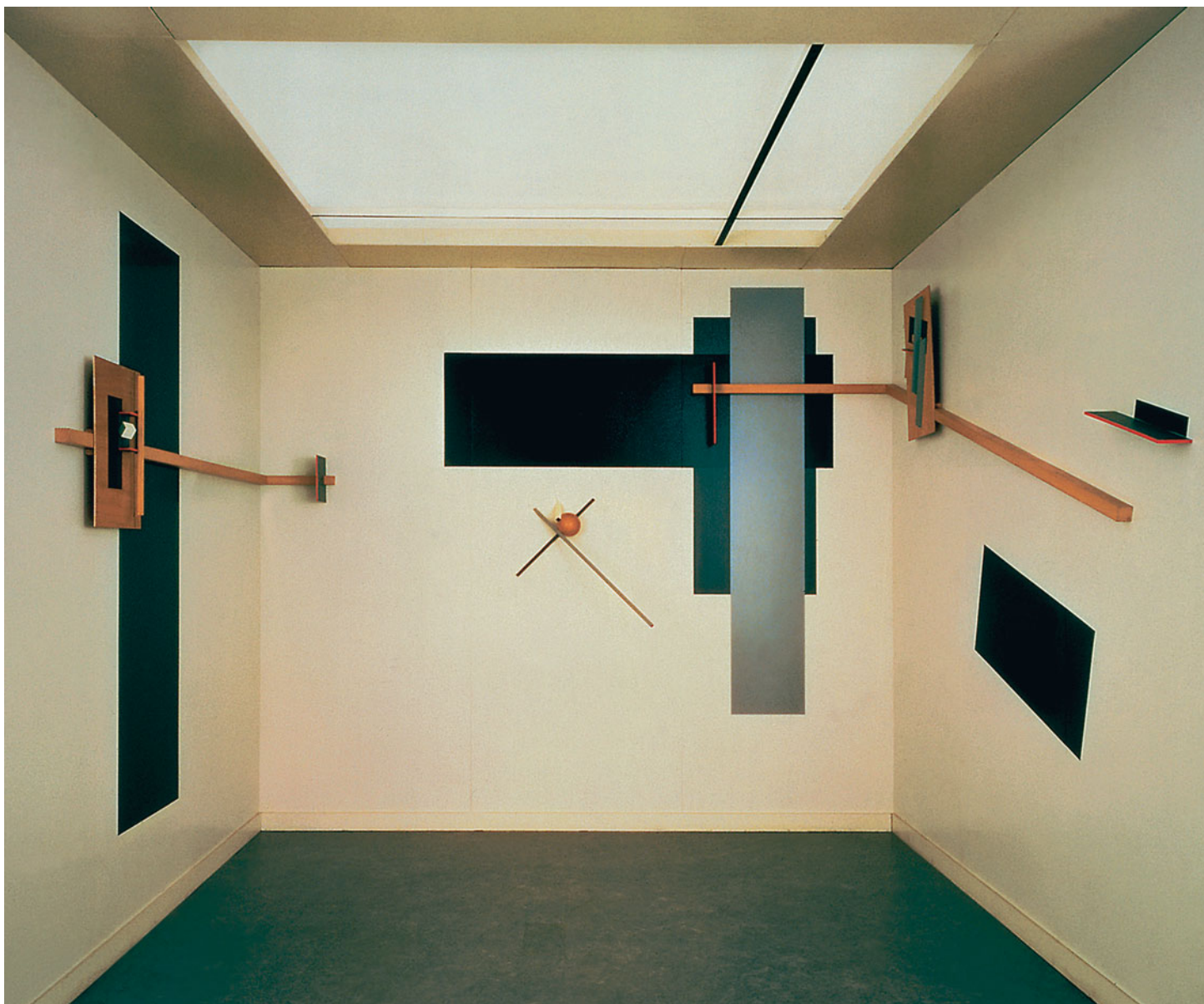
UTILITARIAN ART FORMS IN RUSSIA

In the 1917 Russian Revolution, the radical socialist Bolsheviks overthrew the tsar, withdrew Russia from the world war, and turned inward to fight a civil war that lasted until 1920 and led to the establishment of the U.S.S.R. (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). Most Russian avant-garde artists enthusiastically supported the Bolsheviks, who initially supported them.

CONSTRUCTIVISM The case of Aleksandr Rodchenko (1891–1956) is fairly representative. An early associate of Malevich (see FIG. 32-25), Rodchenko used drafting tools to make abstract drawings. He exhibited as a Suprematist in 1921 when he showed three large, flat, monochromatic panels painted red, yellow, and blue, which he titled *Last Painting* (now lost). After this, he renounced painting as a basically selfish activity and condemned self-expression as weak, unproductive, and socially irresponsible. Also in 1921, Rodchenko helped to establish the Constructivists, a post-revolutionary group of artists dedicated not to expressing themselves but to working collectively for the good of the state. They described themselves as workers who literally “constructed” art for the people. After 1921, Rodchenko worked as a photographer producing posters, books, textiles, and theater sets to promote communism.



32-46 • Aleksandr Rodchenko WORKERS' CLUB
Exhibited at the International Exposition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts, Paris. 1925. Art © Estate of Aleksandr Rodchenko/RAO, Moscow/VAGA, New York



32-47 • El Lissitzky **PROUN SPACE**

Created for the Great Berlin Art Exhibition. 1923, reconstruction 1971. Collection Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands.

In 1925, Rodchenko designed a model **WORKERS' CLUB** for the Soviet Pavilion at the Paris International Exposition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts (FIG. 32-46). Rodchenko emphasized ease of use and simplicity of construction; he made the furniture of wood because Soviet industry was best equipped for mass production in wood. The high, straight backs of the chairs were meant to promote a physical and moral posture of uprightness among the workers.

Another artist active in early Soviet Russia was El Lissitzky (1890–1941). After the Revolution, he taught architecture and graphic arts at the Vitebsk School of Fine Arts where Malevich also taught. By 1919, Lissitzky was both teaching and using a Constructivist vocabulary for propaganda posters and for artworks he called Prouns (pronounced “pro-oon”), thought to be an acronym for the Russian *proekt utverzhdeniya novogo* (“project for the

affirmation of the new”). Although most Prouns were paintings or prints, there were a few early examples of **installation art** (FIG. 32-47)—artworks created for a specific site, arranged to create a total environment. Lissitzky rejected painting as too personal and imprecise, preferring to “construct” Prouns for the collective using the less personal instruments of mechanical drawing. Like many other Soviet artists of the late 1920s, Lissitzky also turned to more socially engaged projects such as architectural design, typography, photography, and photomontage for publication.

SOCIALIST REALISM In the mid 1920s, Soviet artists increasingly rejected abstraction in favor of a more universally accessible, and thus more politically useful, Socialist Realism that was ultimately established as official Soviet art. Many of Russia’s pioneering Modernists and Constructivists, including Rodchenko,



32-48 • Vera Mukhina WORKER AND COLLECTIVE FARM WOMAN

Sculpture for the Soviet Pavilion, Paris Universal Exposition. 1937. Stainless steel, height approx. 78' (23.8 m).

made the change willingly because they were already committed to the national cause, but others, who refused to change, were fired from public positions and lost public support.

The move to Socialist Realism was led by the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (AKhRR), founded in 1922 to depict Russian workers, peasants, revolutionary activists, and the Red Army. AKhRR sought to document the history of the U.S.S.R. by promoting its leaders and goals. Artists were commissioned to create public paintings and sculptures as well as posters for mass distribution; their subjects were heroic or inspirational people and themes, and their style was an easily readable realism.

Vera Mukhina (1889–1953) was a member of AKhRR and is best known for her 78-foot-tall stainless-steel sculpture of a **WORKER AND COLLECTIVE FARM WOMAN** (FIG. 32-48) made for the Soviet Pavilion at the Paris Universal Exposition of 1937. The sculpture shows a powerfully built male factory worker and an equally powerful female farm laborer, with hammer and sickle held high in the air, the same two tools that appeared on the Soviet flag. The figures stand as equals, partners in their common cause, striding purposefully into the future with determined faces, their windblown clothing billowing behind them.

DE STIJL IN THE NETHERLANDS

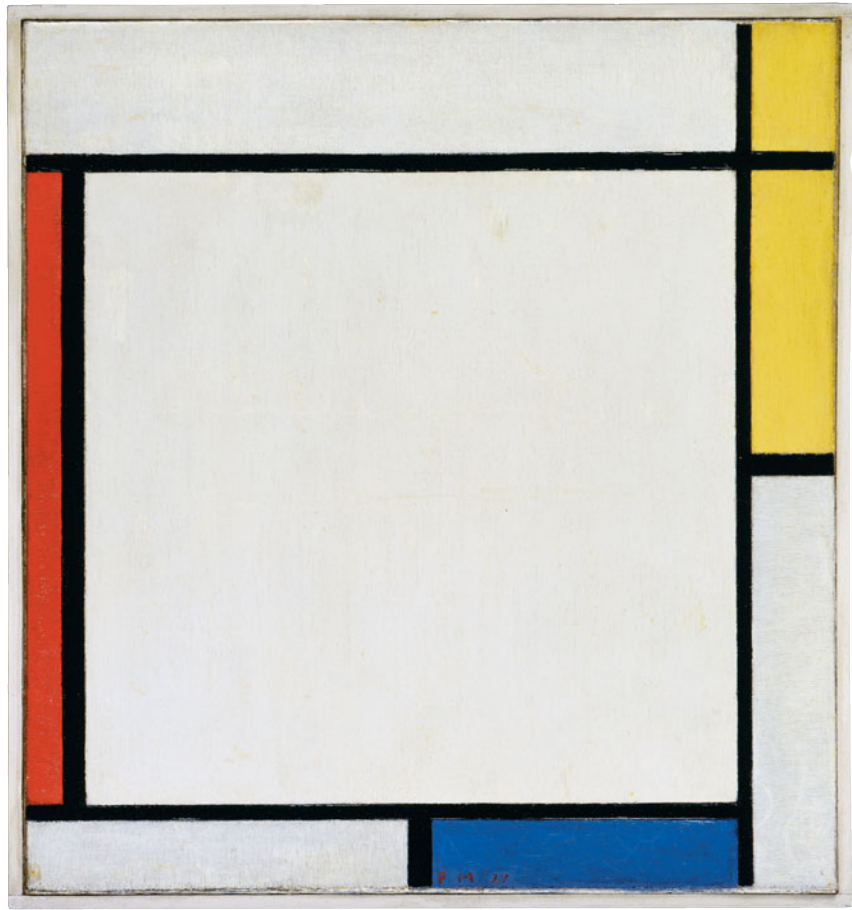
In the Netherlands after World War I, abstraction took a different turn from that in the U.S.S.R. The Dutch artist Piet Mondrian (1872–1944) encountered Cubism on a trip to Paris in 1912, where he began to abstract animals, trees, and landscapes, searching for their “essential” form. After his return to the Netherlands, he met Theo van Doesburg (1883–1931) who, in 1917, started a magazine named *De Stijl* (*The Style*) that became a focal point for Dutch artists, architects, and designers after the war. Writing in the magazine, Van Doesburg argued that beauty took two distinct forms: sensual or subjective beauty, and a higher, rational, and universal beauty. He challenged *De Stijl* (note the term translates as “*The Style*” rather than “*A Style*”) artists to aspire to universal beauty. Mondrian sought to accomplish this by eliminating everything sensual or subjective from his paintings, but he also followed M.H.J. Schoenmaekers’s ideas about Theosophy, as expressed in his 1915 book *New Image of the World*. Schoenmaekers argued that an inner visual construction of nature consisted of a balance between opposing forces, such as heat and cold, male and female, order and disorder, and that artists might represent this inner construction in abstract paintings by using only horizontal and vertical lines and primary colors.

Mondrian’s later paintings are visual embodiments of both Schoenmaekers’s theory and *De Stijl*’s artistic ideas. In **COMPOSITION WITH YELLOW, RED, AND BLUE** (FIG. 32-49), for example, Mondrian uses the three primary colors (red, yellow, and blue), three neutrals (white, gray, and black), and a grid of horizontal and vertical lines in his search for the essence of higher beauty and the balance of forces. Mondrian’s opposing lines and colors balance a harmony of opposites that he called a “dynamic equilibrium” and which he achieved by carefully plotting an arrangement of colors, shapes, and visual weights grouped asymmetrically around the edges of a canvas, with the center acting as a blank white fulcrum. Mondrian hoped that *De Stijl* would have applications in the real world by creating an entirely new visual environment for living, designed according to the rules of a “universal beauty” that, when perfectly balanced, would bring equilibrium and purity to the world. Mondrian said that he hoped to be the world’s last artist, because, while art brought humanity to everyday life, when “universal beauty” infused all aspects of life, there would no longer be a need for art.

The architect and designer Gerrit Rietveld (1888–1964) applied Mondrian’s principles of dynamic equilibrium and *De Stijl*’s aesthetic theories to architecture and created one of the most important examples of the International Style (see “The International Style,” page 1057). Interlocking gray and white planes of varying sizes, combined with horizontal and vertical accents in primary colors and black, create the radically asymmetrical exterior of the **SCHRÖDER HOUSE** in Utrecht (FIG. 32-50). Inside, the “**RED-BLUE**” CHAIR (FIG. 32-51) echoes this same arrangement. Sliding partitions allow modifications in the interior spaces used for sleeping, working, and entertaining. The patron of the house, Truus

32-49 • Piet Mondrian
COMPOSITION WITH YELLOW,
RED, AND BLUE

1927. Oil on canvas, 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ " \times 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (37.8 \times 34.9 cm). The Menil Collection, Houston.
© 2012 Mondrian/Holtzman Trust c/o HCR
International USA



32-50 • Gerrit Rietveld
SCHRÖDER HOUSE, UTRECHT
The Netherlands. 1925.





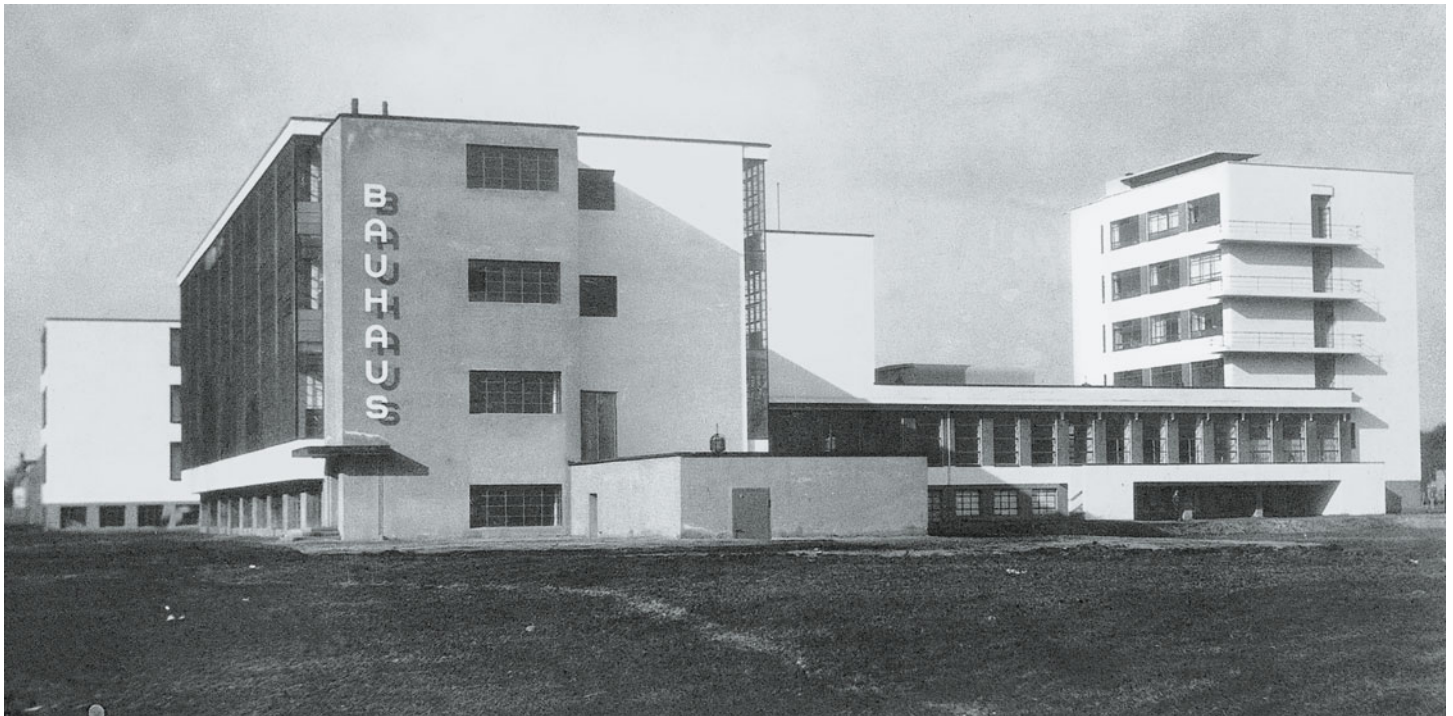
32-51 • Gerrit Rietveld INTERIOR, SCHRÖDER HOUSE, WITH “RED-BLUE” CHAIR
1925.

Schröder-Schröder, wanted a home that suggested an elegant austerity, with basic necessities sleekly integrated into a balanced and restrained whole.

THE BAUHAUS IN GERMANY

In Germany, the creators of the Bauhaus (“House of Building”), which had been founded by Walter Gropius (1883–1969) in Weimar in 1919, found the strict geometric shapes and lines of Purism (see FIG. 32-40) and De Stijl too rigid and argued that a true German architecture and design should emerge organically. Gropius brought together German architects, designers, and craftsmakers at the Bauhaus, where their collective creative energy could be harnessed to create an integrated system of design and production based on German traditions and styles. Gropius believed that he could revive the spirit of collaboration of the medieval building guilds (*Bauhütten*) that had erected Germany’s cathedrals.

Although Gropius’s “Bauhaus Manifesto” of 1919 declared that “the ultimate goal of all artistic activity is the building,” the Bauhaus offered no formal training in architecture until 1927. Gropius only allowed his students to begin architectural training after they completed a mandatory foundation course and received full training in design and



32-52 • Walter Gropius BAUHAUS BUILDING, DESSAU
Anhalt, Germany. 1925–1926. View from northwest.



32-53 • Marianne Brandt COFFEE AND TEA SERVICE
1924. Silver and ebony, with Plexiglas cover for sugar bowl. Tray, 13" × 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (33 × 51.5 cm). Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin.

crafts in the Bauhaus workshops. These included pottery, metalwork, textiles, stained glass, furniture, wood carving, and wall paintings. In 1922, Gropius also added a new emphasis on industrial design and the next year hired the Hungarian-born László Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946) to reorient the workshops toward more functional design suitable for mass production.

In 1925, when the Bauhaus moved to Dessau, Gropius designed its new building. Although the structure openly acknowledges its reinforced concrete, steel, and glass materials, there is also a balanced asymmetry to its three large cubic areas that was intended to convey the dynamism of modern life (FIG. 32-52). A glass-panel wall wraps around two sides of the workshop wing of the building to provide natural light for the workshops inside, while a parapet below demonstrates how modern engineering methods could create light, airy spaces. Both Moholy-Nagy and Gropius left the Bauhaus in 1928. The school eventually moved to Berlin in 1932, but lasted only one more year before the new German chancellor, Adolf Hitler, forced its closure (see "Suppression of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany," page 1056). Hitler opposed Modern art on two grounds. First, he believed it was cosmopolitan rather than nationalistic; second, he erroneously maintained that it was overly influenced by Jews.

Marianne Brandt's (1893–1983) elegant **COFFEE AND TEA SERVICE** (FIG. 32-53)—a prototype handcrafted in silver for mass production in cheaper metals—is an example of the collaboration between design and industry at the Bauhaus. After the Bauhaus moved to Dessau, Brandt also designed lighting fixtures and table lamps for mass production, earning much-needed revenue for the school. After the departure of Moholy-Nagy and Gropius, Brandt took over the metal workshop for a year before she too left, in 1929. As a woman in the otherwise

all-male metal workshop, Brandt made an exceptional contribution to the Bauhaus.

Although the Bauhaus claimed that women were admitted on an equal basis with men, Gropius opposed their education as architects and channeled them into what he considered the more gender-appropriate workshops of pottery and textiles. Berlin-born Anni Albers (b. Annelise Fleischmann, 1899–1994) arrived at the school in 1922 and married the Bauhaus graduate and professor Josef Albers (1888–1976) in 1925. Obligated to enter the textiles workshop rather than the painting studio, Anni Albers made "pictorial" weavings and wall hangings (FIG. 32-54) that were so innovative that they actually replaced paintings on the walls of several modern buildings. Her decentralized, rectilinear designs make reference to the aesthetics of De Stijl, but differ in their open



32-54 • Anni Albers WALL HANGING
1926. Silk, three-ply weave, 5'11 $\frac{5}{16}$ " × 3'11 $\frac{5}{16}$ " (1.83 × 1.22 m). Harvard Art Museums/Busch-Reisinger Museum, Association Fund.

ART AND ITS CONTEXTS | Suppression of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany

In the 1930s, the avant-garde was increasingly disparaged by Hitler and the rising Nazi Party. This led to a concerted effort to suppress it. One of the principal targets was the Bauhaus. Through much of the 1920s, important artists such as Paul Klee, Vassily Kandinsky, Josef Albers, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe taught classes there, but they struggled against an increasingly hostile and reactionary political climate. As early as 1924, conservatives accused the Bauhaus of being not only educationally unsound but also politically subversive. To avoid having the school shut down by the opposition, Gropius moved it to Dessau in 1925, at the invitation of Dessau's liberal mayor, but he left office soon after the relocation and his successors faced increasing political pressure to close the school as it was a prime center of Modernist practice. The Bauhaus moved again in 1932, this time to Berlin.

After Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933, the Nazi Party mounted an even more aggressive campaign against Modern art. In his youth Hitler had been a mediocre landscape painter, and he developed an intense hatred of the avant-garde. During the first year of his regime, the Bauhaus was forced to close permanently. A number of the artists, designers, and architects who had been on its faculty—including Albers, Gropius, and Mies—fled to the United States.

The Nazis also attacked German Expressionist artists, whose often-intense depictions of German politics and the economic crisis after the war criticized the state and whose frequent caricatures of German facial

features and body types undermined Nazi attempts to redraw Germans as idealized Aryans. Expressionist and avant-garde art was removed from museums and confiscated, and artists were forbidden to buy paint or canvas and were subjected to public intimidation.

In 1937, the Nazi leadership organized an exhibition of what they termed “Degenerate Art” in an attempt to ridicule the banned Modern art and erase its makers. The Nazis described avant-garde Modernism as sick and degenerate, presenting the confiscated paintings and sculptures as specimens of pathology and scrawling slogans and derisive commentaries on the walls of the exhibition (FIG. 32-55). Ironically, in Munich as many as 2 million people viewed the four-month exhibition of 650 paintings, sculptures, prints, and books confiscated from German museums and artists, and another 1 million visitors saw it on its three-year tour of German cities.

Large numbers of confiscated works destined for destruction were actually looted by Nazi officials and sold in Switzerland in exchange for foreign currency. The ownership of much of the surviving art is still in question. Many artists fled to neighboring countries or the United States, but some, like Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, whose *Street, Berlin* (see FIG. 32-13) appeared in the “Degenerate Art” exhibition, were driven to suicide by their loss. Even the work of artists sympathetic to the Nazi position was not safe. The works of Emil Nolde (see FIG. 32-12), who joined the Nazi Party in 1932, were also confiscated.



32-55 • THE DADA WALL IN ROOM 3 OF THE “DEGENERATE ART” (“ENTARTETE KUNST”) EXHIBITION Munich, 1937. Art © Estate of George Grosz/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

After World War I, increased communication among Modern architects led to the development of a common formal language, transcending national boundaries, which came to be known as the International Style. The first concentrated manifestation of the movement was in 1927 at the Deutscher Werkbund's Weissenhofsiedlung exhibition in Stuttgart, Germany, directed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886–1969), an architect who, like Gropius, was associated with the Bauhaus in Germany. The purpose of this semipermanent show was to present a range of model homes that used new technologies and made no reference to historical styles. The buildings featured flat roofs, plain walls, off-center openings, and rectilinear designs by Mies, Gropius, Le Corbusier, and others.

The term "International Style" gained currency as a result of a 1932 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, "The International Style: Architecture Since 1922," organized by architectural historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock and architect and curator Philip Johnson. Hitchcock and Johnson identified three fundamental principles of the style.

The first was "the conception of architecture as volume rather than mass." The use of a structural skeleton of steel and ferroconcrete made it possible to eliminate loadbearing walls on both the exterior and the interior. As a result, buildings could be wrapped in skins of glass,

metal, or masonry, creating the effect of enclosed space (volume) rather than dense material (mass). Interiors featured open, free-flowing plans providing maximum flexibility in the organization of space.

The second was "regularity rather than symmetry as the chief means of ordering design." Regular distribution of structural supports and the use of standard building parts promoted rectangular regularity rather than the balanced axial symmetry of Classical architecture. The avoidance of Classical balance also encouraged an asymmetrical disposition of the building's components, including doors and windows.

The third was the rejection of "arbitrary applied decoration." The new architecture depended on the intrinsic elegance of its materials and the formal arrangement of its elements to produce harmonious aesthetic effects. The most extreme International Style buildings would be unadorned glass boxes.

According to Hitchcock and Johnson, the International Style originated in the Netherlands (De Stijl), France (Purism), and Germany (Bauhaus). After the 1932, it spread to the United States. The conceptual clarity of the International Style allowed it to remain vital until the 1970s, especially in the United States, where many of its original European architects, such as Mies and Gropius, who had escaped Hitler and the rise of Nazism in Germany in the 1930s, practiced.

acknowledgment of the natural process of weaving. Albers's goal was "to let threads be articulate ... and find a form for themselves to no other end than their own orchestration."

SURREALISM AND THE MIND

In France during the early 1930s, a group of artists and writers took a very different approach to Modernism in a revolt against logic and reason. Embracing irrational, disorderly, aberrant, and even violent social interventions, Surrealism emerged initially as an offshoot of Dada born from the mind of poet André Breton (1896–1966). Breton trained in medicine and psychiatry and served in a neurological hospital during World War I where he used Freudian analysis on shell-shocked soldiers. By 1924, Breton, still drawn to the vagaries of the human mind, published the "Manifesto of Surrealism," reflecting Freud's conception of the human mind as a battleground where the irrational forces of the unconscious wage a constant war against the rational, orderly, and oppressive forces of the conscious. Breton sought to explore humanity's most base, irrational, and forbidden sexual desires, secret fantasies, and violent instincts by freeing the conscious mind from reason. As Breton wrote in 1934, "we still live under the rule of logic." To escape this restraint, he and other Surrealists developed strategies to liberate the unconscious using dream analysis, free association, automatic writing, word games, and hypnotic trances. Surrealists studied acts of "criminal madness" and the "female mind" in particular, believing the latter to be weaker and more irrational than the male mind. The only way to improve the war-sick society of

the 1920s, Breton thought, was to discover the more intense "sur-reality" that transcended rational constraint.

AUTOMATISM Surrealist artists employed a variety of techniques, including **automatism**—releasing the subconscious to create the work of art without rational intervention in order to produce surprising new juxtapositions of imagery and forms. Max Ernst (1891–1976), a self-taught German artist who collaborated in Cologne Dada and later joined Breton's circle in Paris, developed the automatist technique of **frottage** in 1925. First he rubbed a pencil or crayon over a piece of paper placed on a textured surface and allowed the resulting image to stimulate his imagination, discovering within it fantastic creatures, plants, and landscapes that he articulated more clearly with additional drawing. In painting, Ernst called this new technique **grattage**, with which he scraped layers of paint over a canvas laid on a textured surface, and then "revealed" the imagery he saw in the paint with additional painting. **THE HORDE (FIG. 32–56)** of 1927 shows a nightmarish scene of monsters advancing against an unseen force. Surely the horrors of World War I that Ernst had experienced firsthand in the German army lie behind such frightening images.

UNEXPECTED JUXTAPOSITIONS The paintings of Salvador Dalí (1904–1989) include more recognizable figures and forms, but they also reveal the visual wonders of a subconscious mind run wild. Dalí trained at the San Fernando Academy of Fine Arts in Madrid, where he mastered the traditional methods of illusion-



32-56 • Max Ernst THE HORDE

1927. Oil on canvas, 44 $\frac{7}{8}$ " × 57 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (114 × 146.1 cm).
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

istic representation, and traveled to Paris in 1928, where he met the Surrealists. Dalí's contribution to Surrealist theory was the "paranoid-critical method," in which he cultivated the paranoid's ability to misread, mangle, and misconstrue ordinary appearances, thus liberating himself from the shackles of conventional rational thought. Then he painted what he had imagined.

Dalí's paintings focus on a few key themes: sexuality, violence, and putrefaction. In the **BIRTH OF LIQUID DESIRES** (FIG. 32-57), we see a large yellow biomorphic form (an organic shape resembling a living organism)—looking like a monster's face, a painter's palette, or a woman's body—that serves as the backdrop for four figures. A woman in white embraces a hermaphroditic figure who stands with one foot in a bowl that is being filled with liquid by a third figure, partially hidden, while a fourth figure enters a cavernous hole to the left. A thick black cloud above the scene poses a question: "Consign: to waste the total slate?" Dalí claimed that he simply painted what his paranoid-critical mind had conjured up in his nightmares. Dalí's images are thus, as Breton advocated, "the true process of thought, free from the exercise of reason and from any aesthetic or moral purpose." They defy rational interpretation although they trigger fear, anxiety, and even regression in our empathetic minds.

Dalí's strangely compelling art also draws on the Surrealist interest in unexpected juxtapositions of disparate realities. Surrealists argued that by juxtaposing several disparate ordinary objects in strange new contexts artists could create uncanny surrealities. One of the most disturbingly exquisite and mockingly humorous examples is **OBJECT (LUNCHEON IN FUR)** (FIG. 32-58), by the Swiss artist Meret Oppenheim (1913–1985). Oppenheim was one of the few women invited to participate in the Surrealist movement. Surrealists generally treated women as their muses or as objects of

32-57 • Salvador Dalí BIRTH OF LIQUID DESIRES


1931–1932. Oil and collage on canvas, 37 $\frac{7}{8}$ " × 44 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (96.1 × 112.3 cm). The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice 1976 (76.2553 PG 100)





32-58 • Meret Oppenheim OBJECT (LUNCHEON IN FUR)

1936. Fur-covered cup, diameter $4\frac{3}{8}$ " (10.9 cm); fur-covered saucer, diameter $9\frac{3}{8}$ " (23.7 cm); fur-covered spoon, length 8" (20.2 cm); overall height, $2\frac{7}{8}$ " (7.3 cm). Museum of Modern Art, New York.

 **View** the Closer Look for Object on myartslab.com

study, but not their equals: Picasso even claimed to have “given” Oppenheim the idea for this sculpture. *Object* consists of an actual cup, saucer, and spoon covered with the fur of a Chinese gazelle (chosen for its resemblance in texture to pubic hair). It transposes two objects (a tea setting and gazelle fur) from their ordinary reality, recontextualizes them in an irrational new surreality, and transforms them into an uncanny object that is simultaneously desirable and deeply disturbing.

BIOMORPHIC ABSTRACTION The Catalan artist Joan Miró (1893–1983) exhibited regularly with the Surrealists but never formally joined the movement. Miró’s biomorphic abstraction is also intended to free the mind from rationality, but in a more benign manner. His **COMPOSITION** (FIG. 32-59) of 1933 is populated by curving biomorphic primal or mythic shapes that seem arranged by chance, emerging from the artist’s mind uncensored, like doodles, to dance gleefully around the canvas. The Surrealists



32-59 • Joan Miró COMPOSITION

1933. Oil on canvas, $51\frac{1}{4}$ " \times $63\frac{1}{2}$ " (130.2 \times 161.3 cm). Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford, Connecticut.

used the free association of doodling to relax the conscious mind so that images could bubble up from the unconscious. Miró reportedly first doodled on his canvases, then painted the revealed shapes and forms. His images do seem to take shape before our eyes, but their identity is always in flux. Miró was also fascinated by children's art, which he thought of as spontaneous and expressive and, although he was a well-trained artist himself, he said that he wished he could learn to paint with the freedom of a child.


UNIT ONE IN ENGLAND

In 1933, the English artists Barbara Hepworth (1903–1975), Henry Moore (1898–1986), and Paul Nash (1889–1946), along with the poet and critic Herbert Read (1893–1968), founded Unit One. Although short-lived, this group promoted the use of hand-crafted, Surrealist-influenced biomorphic forms in sculpture, brought new energy to British art in the 1930s, and exerted a lasting impact on British sculpture.

Hepworth studied at the Leeds School of Art. She punctuated her exquisitely crafted sculptures with holes so that air and light



32-60 • Barbara Hepworth FORMS IN ECHELON
1938. Wood, 42½" × 23¾" × 28" (108 × 60 × 71 cm). Tate, London.
Presented by the artist 1964 © Bowness, Hepworth Estate.

 **Read** the document related to Barbara Hepworth on myartslab.com

could pass through them. **FORMS IN ECHELON** (FIG. 32-60) consists of two biomorphic shapes carved in highly polished wood. Hepworth hoped that viewers would allow their eyes to play around with these organic forms, letting viewer imagination generate changing associations and meanings.

Moore also carved punctured sculptural abstractions, although his works were more obviously based on the human form. He also studied at the Leeds School of Art and then at the Royal College of Art in London. The African, Oceanic, and Pre-Columbian sculpture that he saw at the British Museum, however, had a more powerful impact on his developing aesthetic than his academic training. He felt that artists beyond the Western tradition showed a greater respect for the inherent qualities of materials such as stone or wood than their Western counterparts.

The reclining female nude is the dominant theme of Moore's art. The massive simplified body in **RECUMBENT FIGURE** (FIG. 32-61) refers to the *chacmool*, a reclining human form in Toltec and Maya art (see FIG. 13-14). Moore's sculptures also reveal his special sensitivity to the inherent qualities of his stone, which he sought out in remote quarries, always insisting that each of his works be labeled with the specific kind of stone he had used. While certain aspects of the human body are clearly described in this sculpture—the head, breasts, supporting elbow, and raised knee—other parts seem to flow together into an undulating mass suggestive of a hilly landscape. The cavity at the center inverts our expectations about the solid and void. In 1937, Moore wrote: "A hole can itself have as much shape-meaning as a solid mass."

MODERN ART IN THE AMERICAS BETWEEN THE WARS

A need for a national visual identity emerged in American art between the wars, but since the United States was a large, diverse nation with multiple "identities," attempts to consolidate the fiction of a single, essentially male, Anglo-Saxon national profile only heightened the visibility of the creative and experimental works of art by African Americans, immigrants, women, and others.

THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

In the 1930s, hundreds of thousands of African Americans migrated from the rural, mostly agricultural American South to the urban, industrialized North to escape racial oppression and find greater social and economic opportunities. This Great Migration prompted the formation of the nationwide New Negro movement and the Harlem Renaissance in New York, which called for greater social and political activism among African Americans.

Harlem's wealthy middle-class African-American community produced some of the nation's most talented artists of the 1920s and 1930s, such as the jazz musician Duke Ellington, the novelist Jean Toomer, and the poet Langston Hughes. The movement's



32-61 • Henry Moore
RECUMBENT FIGURE
 1938. Green Hornton stone,
 35" × 52" × 29" (88.9 × 132.7 ×
 73.7 cm). Tate, London.

Moore created this work to fulfill a commission from Russian-born British architect Serge Chermayeff, who installed it on the terrace of his modern home on the Downs.

intellectual leader was Alain Locke (1886–1954), a critic and philosophy professor who argued that black artists should seek their artistic roots in the traditional arts of Africa rather than assimilate within mainstream American or European artistic traditions.

James Van Der Zee (1886–1983), a studio photographer who took carefully crafted portraits of the Harlem upper-middle classes, opened his studio in 1916, working both as a news reporter and a society photographer. **COUPLE WEARING RACCOON COATS**

WITH A CADILLAC (FIG. 32-62) captures a wealthy man and woman posing with their new car in 1932, at the height of the Great Depression. The photograph reveals the glamor of Harlem, then the center of African-American cultural life.

The painter Aaron Douglas (1898–1979), from Topeka, Kansas, moved to New York City in 1925. He developed a collaged silhouette style that owes much to African art and had a lasting impact on later African-American artists (see FIG. 33-73). He painted



32-62 • James Van Der Zee **COUPLE WEARING RACCOON COATS WITH A CADILLAC, TAKEN ON WEST 127TH STREET, HARLEM, NEW YORK**
 1932. Gelatin-silver print.

In January 1937, as the Spanish Civil War between the Republicans and the Nationalists began to escalate, the Spanish artist Pablo Picasso, who was then living in Paris, was commissioned to make a large painting for the Spanish Pavilion of the 1938 Paris Exposition, a direct descendant of the nineteenth-century World's Fairs that resulted in the Crystal Palace and the Eiffel Tower. The 1938 Spanish Pavilion was the first Spanish national pavilion at any World's Fair.

As Picasso pondered what he might create for the exposition, on April 26, 1937, Nationalist-supporting German bombers attacked the town of Guernica in the Basque region of Spain, killing and wounding 1,600 civilians. The cold-blooded, calculating nature of the inhuman attack on Guernica shocked Europe. For more than three hours, 25 bombers dropped 100,000 pounds of explosives on the town, while more than 20 fighter planes strafed anyone caught in the streets trying to flee destroyed or burning buildings. Fires burned in Guernica for three days. By the end, one-third of the town's population was killed or wounded and 75 percent of its buildings had been destroyed (**FIG. 32-63**). The attack seemed to serve no military purpose, other than to allow Franco's Nationalist forces to terrorize civilian populations, but the true horror only emerged with the revelation that the German commander had planned the massacre merely as a "training mission" for the German air force. The horrified Picasso now had his subject for the Fair.

On May 1, 1 million protesters marched in Paris, and the following day Picasso made his first preliminary sketches for his visual response to this atrocity. Picasso had been trained in the traditions of academic painting, and he planned **GUERNICA** (**FIG. 32-64**) as an monumental history painting detailing the historic, and ignoble, events of the attack. He made several preliminary sketches (*esquisses*) to develop the composition, colors, during ten days of intensive planning, before moving on to canvas. He worked at the painting itself—changing figures, altering colors, and developing his themes—for another month.

Guernica is a complex painting, layered with meaning. Picasso rarely used specific or obvious symbolism in his art, preferring to let individual viewers interpret specific details themselves. What is beyond question,



however, is that *Guernica* is a scene of brutality, chaos, terror, and suffering. Painted in black, white, and dark blue, the image resonates with anguish. It freezes figures in mid-movement in stark black and white as if caught by the flashbulb of a reporter's camera.

32-63 • RUINS OF GUERNICA, SPAIN
April 1937.



32-64 • Pablo Picasso GUERNICA
1937. Oil on canvas, 11'6" × 25'8" (3.5 × 7.8 m). Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid. On permanent loan from the Museo del Prado, Madrid.